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LETTERS ON SOUTH AMERICA.

VOLUME II.

LETTERS
ON
SOUTH AMERICA;

COMPRISING
TRAVELS ON THE BANKS OF THE PARANÁ
AND RIO DE LA PLATA.

BY
J. P. AND W. P. ROBERTSON,
AUTHORS OF "LETTERS ON PARAGUAY," AND "FRANCIA'S REIGN."

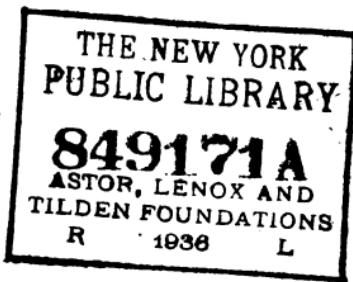
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LETTERS ON SOUTH AMERICA.

LETTER XXIV.

W. P. R. to GENERAL MILLER.

Preparations to leave Goya—The Goya Squire—His Daughters—Doña Rosita—The Young Lover, Duval—The Old Lover, Mora.

London, 1842.

We now hastened, in every way we could, the finale of our Corrientes and Goya adventures, Campbell using double exertions to bring all our outstanding contracts to a close. We succeeded so well that towards the end of August we found we had as much produce at Goya and Corrientes as would load our own vessel, the *San José*, as well as our friend Don Agustin Saenz's *polacca*, which we chartered for the purpose. A great additional degree of activity was to be observed at the port: the creaking wheels of the waggons of our own and other *tropas* were to be heard daily, as they drew up their loads to the verdant quay or river side; the beating or tattooing of hides sounded in my ears

from morning till night ; ever and anon Campbell, with half a dozen of his followers or friends, was to be seen galloping up to my door, where were assembled all classes of traffickers, traders, and employés, dispatching by turns their various business with me connected with the winding up. In short, a busy and animated scene was constantly going forward in the generally quiet port of Goya.

About the middle of September, my brother having closed or made over to Mr. Postlethwaite all his Corrientes affairs, and having put on board the San José what produce he had there, shipped his own person in that vessel, and joined me at Goya, on his way to Buenos Ayres.

While we were thus together engaged in bringing all to a close, and anxiously looking forward to the day which was to see us fairly under way for the River Plate, an incident arose which threatened rather serious consequences, and which was on the whole of so singular a nature, as to deserve the somewhat ample recital which I now propose to give you of it.

When I first introduced our readers to the society of Goya, I mentioned that it boasted of two estancieros, or South American squires, and their families.

Their estates lying more conveniently for the port than for the capital, they fixed upon the former as the proper place for their town residence.

One of these squires had a nice family: a buxom wife, two or three hobble-de-hoy sons, and three or four daughters, the two oldest grown up, and the prettiest girls of Goya. The father indulged them, and allowed them much of their own way; the mother was proud of them, told them to hold up their heads with the best in Goya, and dressed them out and showed them off to the greatest advantage.

With respect to the name of this squire, our fashionable London readers will doubtless smile when I say that I hesitate to give the *real* appellation of the family in question. But as I do not doubt the offshoots of the *estanciero* have flourished apace,—as his progeny, in all probability, move in the higher circles of the present day in Goya, they may not relish their names being brought forward in the present annals of the order and rise of their house. It is true we are here at a great distance from Goya; but what I now write may change its English garb, take a Spanish one, and “circulate” from the libraries of Goya, among all the fashionables of the place. Since our “Letters on Para-

guay" are now performing this rotatory motion in the land of the Jesuits, it is no unfair inference to assume that these Letters on the River Plate may, ere long, circulate in Corrientes.

I shall call the country squire, therefore, Don Baltazar Gonzalez. Each of his two grown up daughters had her own peculiar style of beauty, but on the whole the oldest, Rosa, or, as she was called, Rosita, was generally esteemed the prettiest. She had large and laughing *blue* eyes, a very scarce, and therefore much admired, eye in South America ; her features were not so regular in detail as they were agreeable in the *toute ensemble* ; her lips were "cherry ripe,"—her ever ready smile made her cheek a sort of freehold for her dimples ; her colour exhibited a loving struggle between the rose and the lily for supremacy ; her figure, if not petite, scarcely rose to the middle height, and with handsome proportions,—it was more plump than spare. Her feet, like those of many of the South American ladies, were small, and her ankle well turned ; her step was elastic, her dancing perfection ; and altogether she deserved to be, as she always was, pronounced to be a very fine girl.

I have begun by hastily delineating the external

appearance of the Goya belle, because that being the most obvious to view, is always the first and immediate object of attraction ; but I should do great injustice to Doña Rosita were I not to add, that she was a lively, agreeable, and kind hearted girl ; full of fun and glee, but possessed, for the more serious avocations of life, of warm affections, a good temper, and gentle disposition, which rendered her a general favourite in Goya.

It will not be doubted by my fair readers, nor by any other class of them, that Rosita had many beaux ; indeed she ran a great risk of becoming one of those unfortunate beauties who have so many contending rivals as to end in a state of single blessedness. Everybody admired Rosita ; but then everybody seeing that everybody admired her, nobody in particular appeared courageous enough to step forward and take a preeminent stand with the fair object of general competition ; no one bold enough to disdain all other pretenders but himself, and manfully to lay claim to the prize and carry it off. Thus Rosita was forced, perhaps, into a general flirtation, which she did not like,— her heart was not satisfied, but her vanity was nurtured and kept alive by general admiration.

Among Rosa's "general" admirers, my brother was favourably recognized on one or two occasions that he visited Goya, and I myself, as a neighbour and "general" admirer of good specimens of the fair sex, used now and then to spend agreeably an evening with Don Baltazar and his family, including, of course, the pretty Rosita.

At last, however, two of the many frequenters of Don Baltazar's house settled down into declared and especial lovers. One was an agreeable young man, in business, not over rich, but prudent and likely to rise in the world. He dressed well, had the quiet and insinuating way of your South American lover, played the guitar, danced, and had I know not how many other qualities calculated to win Rosita's heart. The other was a man, verging towards sixty, but hale, tall, erect, plausible, and rich. He was uncle of the comandante, had an entire sway over that functionary, and possessed no small influence in the political affairs of the part in which he resided of Artigas's dominions. But he was jealous, overbearing, tyrannical, and, in particular, he had a Spaniard's dislike of foreigners and of foreign influence of every kind.

Rosita very naturally preferred her younger and

more accomplished suitor, Francisco Duval; but as true love did never yet run smooth, her father favoured the pretensions of Don Antonio Mora. It was said, indeed, there were certain money transactions between the two latter, which had no little weight in turning the balance in favour of Don Antonio.

Be that as it may, there seemed to lie an insuperable barrier between the union of Francisco Duval and Rosa Gonzalez, and the general rumour was current that she was to be married to Mora. I was sorry to hear it, for although on very civil terms with him, he was no favourite of mine; and I had every reason to believe that he held me, in common with all foreigners, in dislike, if not in hatred.

When he used to visit Rosita, if by chance he found any young men there, but more especially Duval or myself, he entered with a scowl, and sat us out as a matter of course. Our younger lover was very much afraid of Mora; for the latter, possessing an underhand influence with the commandante, Duval in the unsettled, if not still lawless state of the country, had an undefined dread that some sinister means might be employed to remove him from the scene, and with him the great obstacle

to Mora's project of marrying Rosita. She, poor thing, got unhappy under this untoward state of the affairs of her heart; while her father and mother, afraid of driving her to extremities, and yet anxious to see her the wife of the rich Don Antonio, became uneasy spectators of the no-progress of their own plans, and of the increasing impatience and anger, under disappointment, of their favoured but chafed friend Mora.

Such was the state of affairs when we were on the eve of our departure from Goya, and there seemed but little chance of Duval being successful in the pending struggle. There is no Gretna Green in that country, otherwise I believe the Gordian knot would at once have been cut and the hymeneal one tied; but in the absence of the northern star which guides so many of our own perplexed pairs to the goal of matrimonial bliss, a new light, at any rate, was thrown on Don Francisco's dubious prospects by a simple and unlooked for incident which arose.

About a fortnight before the day on which we had fixed as that of our final departure from the province of Corrientes, I invited most of the great men of Goya to meet my brother at dinner, that is to say,

I gave a "convite," as such a party is called in that part of the world. I had the worthy curate, the Comandante Brest, Don Pedro Quesnèy, Mr. George Washington Tuckerman, Señor Valdés, a merchant, Don Baltazar Gonzalez, the comandante's uncle, his rival Duvàl, and one or two others, the notables of the port. In addition I had an original countryman of our own,—a Highlander,—one Captain M'Dougall, who commanded a brig which had been sent up the river by an English house to take down some hides which their agent had collected in the province.

All the good things and all the good cooking of Goya were put in requisition for the "convite." To many native dainties, in the shape of roast and ragout, poultry and pies, pastry and sweets, were added English luxuries, consisting of hams, pickles, sauces, Stilton cheese, and other delicacies,—good honest port, brown sherry, and, (what is much cheaper in South America than England,) plenty of claret. The whole furnished out a very good repast for our guests, or, which is the same thing, what they esteemed as such.

The dinner concluded, my brother and I considered that, according to the custom of that day,—

five-and-twenty years ago, though happily a great reform has taken place since,—our next duty was to settle under the table as many of our friends as chose to view that as their legitimate place at the finale of the banquet. Dining with an *Englishman*, the honest Goyeros believed that they were bound by the strictest rules of etiquette, to drink till they could drink no more; for at that time an “English dinner” and “getting drunk” were two ideas rendered indissolubly *one* in their minds. So the wine circulated freely; mirth and hilarity presided over the “festive board,” and without calculating consequences for the next morning, every one was as happy as good cheer and good company could make him. I must except the comandante’s uncle, who somewhat moodily retired after the conclusion of the dinner, and the worthy curate, who, though very happy, took also an early departure.

I was never yet at a “convite” where there were many Spaniards that I did not witness a great deal of pleasantry, drollery, and wit. On this occasion these pleasant ingredients of society were rendered more piquant by the originalities of Tuckerman, Quesnèy, and M'Dougall. The wine softened Tuckerman’s sensibility into many maudlin recol-

lections of his dear Charlotte, when in a set speech he called on us to drink, as “his toast,” to her health; Don Pedro’s volubility and incomprehensibility increased with every glass of claret which he took; while Captain M'Dougall’s Spanish, when he attempted it, was even more amusing than Quesnèy’s. On the other hand his homely broad Scotch, with a Highland accent, when woven in with the finely-spun thread of Tuckerman’s superlative eloquence, formed a web of curiously contrasted material.

I had heard of M'Dougall’s being a great proficient on the violin, and the moment I mentioned the instrument he jumped up, clapped his hands, and giving a wheugh! off he ran to his vessel, moored within 50 yards of where we sat, and returned in three minutes with his fiddle.

He proved to be the most perfect adept at Scotch reels and highland airs (some of which by-the-bye are not at all unlike the South American tristes) that ever delighted my ears; and, in his own particular line, he was the veriest “fanatico per la musica” that ever drew bow across catgut. Those who know the Highlander are aware that his character often develops an

enthusiasm and fervour far surpassing the bounds which the soberer Englishman allows to his inward movements or his outward demonstrations : so that when M'Dougall found his native strains touched the heart, and his Neil Gowisms moved with sympathetic ardour even the souls of the Spaniards, he could scarcely, as a Scotchman, contain his feelings of pride and joy, so far as not to interfere with the heart-stirring strains which, like another Paganini, he drew from the fiddle. But when he heard, in that remote region of the globe, the repeated applauses of his own countrymen ; when we inflamed his imagination by carrying him back to the scenes of our father-land, and called on him for some well-known illustration of them on his magic instrument, for "*Ye banks and braes*," or "*Auld Robin Gray*," or "*Maggie Lawther*," or "*Fie, let us a' to the waddin*;" when, at last, to some irresistible reel, we could no longer keep our seats, but started to our feet as if the ball had commenced,—M'Dougall could no longer restrain his joy ; it overflowed and carried all before it : he turned round and round, threw down his fiddle, flourished his fiddlestick in the air, huzzaed, and gave way to an extravagant delirium of national

buoyancy as he witnessed, on those who surrounded him, the effects of his own performance.

The convite commenced at three o'clock, and at nine it broke up. The comandante got what McDougall called "unco fou," and, himself disorderly, was sent home supported by his two orderlies. Old Gonzalez got to be on the best terms with the modest Duvàl, and, I think, almost went the length of promising to let him have Rosita; while Duvàl could do nothing but look, in return, as lovingly at Gonzalez as if he were his daughter Rosa, squeezing his hand, and ekeing out, by gesticulations, those tender feelings which his tongue refused to express with anything like clearness. As for Tuckerman, he was in the clouds; he apostrophized Charlotte; he essayed to break through a misty conglomeration of imagery of domestic bliss and refined friendship, which lay huddled in confusion on his mind. He spouted about the "blue chamber," and the "sloping lawn" on the banks of the Paraná; and he made his exit, proclaiming an everlasting peace between the star-studded bunting of the United States and the Union Jack of Old England. My brother and myself were just brought to that point which is

called “a little elevated :” but the only man who left the company really sober was Captain M'Dougall. Accustomed to double deep potations of the mountain dew, port wine had no more effect on him than would have been produced by so many glasses of the sparkling beverage drawn from the pebbled brook ; and as for claret, he looked in amazement at those who could designate as *wine* such a “*sour wisha-washaw stuff*” as that which he tasted ; while their pretending to *relish* such a drink was to him altogether unintelligible.

The last of our guests left at nine. Juan, my brother’s trusty black valet, had seen one to his home, put another on his way, and safely disposed of a third ; so that, at half-past nine, all was cleared away and order restored.

At this hour, my brother being, as I have said, somewhat “elevated,” betook himself to a perambulation round the village, and landed at the house of Don Baltazar Gonzalez. He found the wife and daughters laughing at the humorous exhibition which “papa” had made on returning from the convîte more than “half seas over,” supported by Duval as “the blind lead the blind,”

both evidently being in much better tune for the dormitories than the drawing-room. And so, in point of fact, the father had already retired to rest, and Duvàl had found his way to his own house for the night.

The ladies rallied my brother with great animation on our “picardia” or roguery, in having sent their father home in such a plight ; and Rosita was in the highest spirits of all, though it is impossible to say what might be the cause of it. For what could it signify to her that she saw her papa and Duvàl enter the house lovingly, arm in arm together ? Seeing papa was in an almost *non-compos* state, how should we fancy that her heart could first go pit-a-pat, and then bound on hearing him protest that Duvàl was a very honest fellow, and that he wished Mora — — ? Finally, what value could she give, on such an occasion, to Duvàl’s impassioned asseveration that he would *die* rather than see her the wife of another ?

Philosophers can weigh the pros and cons ; and all I have to say is, that Rosita was in exuberant spirits ; that the younger sisters were full of glee ; that the mother was exciting rather than keeping

under their animal spirits by exclaiming, “Did you ever see such madcaps?” and that my brother was in the very act of stealing a kiss from either Rosita or one of the sisters, when the door opened, and the eyes of Mora, like the glare of a tiger, fell on all the party.

He said not a word; but, trembling with rage, and with a now blind and habitual jealousy, he closed the door and retired.

Two or three minutes were sufficient to restore the party within to the gaiety and hilarity which in so disagreeable and unforeseen a way had been interrupted. They were again in the enjoyment of high spirits, till a more serious interruption put an end to them for the night. When the fatal, although unfounded movements of jealousy came to strengthen Mora’s other rancorous feelings towards my brother and myself, both as foreigners and as usurpers of that political influence which he considered to be, in Goya, his exclusive right, his long smothered and vengeful passions broke out with an uncontrollable force. He rushed, accordingly, from Gonzalez’s house to the quartel or guard-house; and knowing that his nephew was unable that night to interfere, he got the officer on

duty at once to go down with a guard of soldiers to Gonzalez's house. What pretext he urged I know not; but the officer implicitly followed Mora's command. They went stealthily to the house; and suddenly rushing in, three or four armed men laid strong hands on my brother, who, amidst the screams of the family, was dragged off as their prisoner to the guard-house. Under the irritating language of Mora much violence was used, and my brother's first impression really was that murder was their object.

They carried him, however, to the guard-house; and that was so near to my own dwelling that I heard the noise and scuffle as they came along. Presently,—when I was half asleep on the sofa,—one of my peons rushed into my room, and exclaimed, “Patrón! Patrón! le han hecho preso al Señor Don Juan!” (they have made a prisoner of your brother.)

Without my hat, and full of astonishment, I ran on to the quartel; and scarcely had I gained admission, when, to my increasing amazement, Mora, almost choked with passion, called out, “Make him your prisoner!” he is as bad as the other; they are both the same: make them both your

prisoners." I was instantly seized by some rough soldiers; hurried with two or three blows to the extremity of the guard-house; and there left *vis-à-vis* with my brother!

Yours, &c.,

W. P. R.

LETTER XXV.

W. P. R. to GENERAL MILLER.

Our Imprisonment—The Goya Prison, and Inmates of the Prison-house—Its Furniture—Our Flitting—A portentous Visit from Macdougall in his Dreadnought—A Dangerous Proposal—Rejected—Weapons of War laid down for the Fiddle—The Supper—The Comandante's Alarm and Interference—He desires to see us, being ill in bed—We refuse to go, but at length consent—The Liberation—Doña Rosita wins over her Papa, and marries her Lover—The result of the Interview—Mora's Chagrin—The Comandante's Rebuke of his Uncle—Mora, ashamed of his doings in Goya, takes to his Estancia, and there remains for Life—Duval's Marriage.

London, 1842.

WHEN we thus suddenly found ourselves really prisoners in the guard house of Goya, my brother and I called up, by an apparently simultaneous movement of the mind, all the incidents of the evening, and our first impulse was to indulge in a hearty fit of laughter. The former then related to me the particulars of his visit to Gonzalez, as I have detailed them in my last letter, and we came to the magnanimous conclusion that our wounded honour, as British subjects, was only to be healed by the defeat, in return, of our self-constituted enemy, the malignant Mora. We determined, accordingly,

that prisoners we would remain till we had ample retributive justice at the hands of the comandante, or if not at his, at those of the governor of the province.

Our prison was like no prison that you have ever seen or heard of in England. It was an immense *galpon*, or barn, having a door in the centre, and any other light which it received during the day, was admitted by the crevices of the thatched roof, or the time-worn apertures in the mud plastered and seamy walls. Such felons, (some of them in irons,) or other prisoners as were detained in it, were, on the present occasion, out of a rude respect to ourselves, huddled together at the opposite end of the building ; the soldiers occupied the centre, and we had a large space left at the other extremity of the barn, for ourselves. Mora had retired as soon as he saw us safely lodged in prison, and immediately after his departure, we got to be on free and easy terms with the officer on guard for the night. He had a latent suspicion that he was not quite right in acting on the orders of Mora, even though the latter was a justice of the peace ; and hence the captain was willing to conciliate us as much as possible.

We had only a couple of hides stretched out for our beds, three or four bullocks' skulls for chairs, and we were lighted by a rude earthen lamp, two-thirds filled with tallow and grease, and a thick cotton wick stuck therein, which it was necessary every now and then to trim, in order to keep its flame alive. The vessel was a small low circular bowl with a handle of Indian manufacture, but not unlike a Roman relic. The floor was neither more nor less than the ground on which the building had been erected, now trodden into an uneven surface of loose clay. The walls had in many places lost their half-plastering of not adhesive mud ; and in these, showing forth the canes used instead of lathes, they looked like the projecting ribs of the carcase of a horse, allowing the free admission of atmospheric air.

The habiliments of the soldiers, and even of the officer, were in keeping with their rough guardhouse. Uncombed hair and unwashed faces, with a profusion of black whiskers and mustachios, tattered clothes, the untanned horse-skin leggings, called potro boots, coming over the instep, but leaving the toes bare ; horse pistols and knives stuck in their girdles, and carbines in their hands ;

such were to be our guardians for the night. The officer's costume differed from that of his men, only by being somewhat better in its general contour. As to the prisoners confined in the quartèl, they had the look of demons, half naked, filthy, rattling in irons, reckless and hardened in their words and actions, terrible, because murderous in their looks.

Being still somewhat excited by the events of the evening, we called the officer, and asked him if there were any objection to our getting some furniture into our prison? He was puzzled by such an unlooked for wish on our part, involving, as he thought, so unnecessary an addition to a night's lodging; but as he had no orders to prevent his gratifying our desire, he told us to do as we liked. Our factotum, Juan, was forthwith in requisition, and the officer good-naturedly lent one of his men to assist in transferring the furniture of my room, including my grand tiger skin carpet, to our prison; chairs, sofa, table, sideboard, plated candlesticks, decanters, all were brought over, and the prison being within a hundred yards of the cottage, the operation was soon concluded. Great was the admiration of the soldiers, greater

that of the felons, as they saw one end of the gloomy galpon, assuming the air of a comfortable room ; and Rembrandt ought to have been there to see the strong light which illuminated our end of the prison, and our own figures, and the deep dark glare which was thrown on the savage, but picturesque group of soldiers, and fettered banditti, the latter mingled together, and over each other's shoulders, scanning in wonder our movements, to them at once incomprehensible and mysterious. On the whole, however, they were much pleased with the transformation which we effected.

We got our wine and water, treated the officer and his men, laughed over the events of the night, and calculated how things might go with us in the morning.

We were thus sitting at our ease, towards twelve o'clock, having ordered in supper, the preparations for which gave evident satisfaction to our fellow prisoners at the other end, when the officer informed me that some one wished to see me at the door. "I know," he added, "you have no design of escaping to night, and you may therefore go freely, on your parole, and speak with your friend."

It had begun to rain, and the person seeking me

I found muffled up in one of those ample great coats, formerly known by the name of *dreadnoughts*, an appropriate one on the present occasion. The man who stood before me was Captain M'Dougall. He was perfectly sober. Grasping my arm, he pulled me a little to one side of the outer wall of the galpon, and then cautiously opening his dreadnought, he displayed to me from under it, a pair of formidable horse pistols. I involuntarily started back, but in the coolest and most deliberate manner, although in an under voice, M'Dougall spoke thus.

“I know your lives are in imminent danger, I have been told you are both to be shot in the morning. These villains will stop at nothing. It is a conspiracy to get you out of the way, not only that they may seize your property, but get the business of the province into their own hands. They are a relentless set, and your only safety is in flight. My boat, manned by four faithful hands, is all in readiness alongside my brig, and I will take the helm. Should any difficulty occur in your getting out from this place (he looked at the door), I am ready to shoot through the head the first man that attempts to stop you; and they are such rascally cowards,”

(he said this with the most ineffable contempt) "that where they see one 'yellow' fellow sprawling on the ground, all the rest will promptly make way for you."

This was an astounding proposition, and all the more so to me, knowing, as I did, that there and then M'Dougall was ready to carry his plan of operation into execution. I had patiently heard him out, which I think is always the best way of getting to the end of a man's story; and when he finished, I began by thanking him for his kindness in offering to run such risks as he proposed to undertake on our account. But I assured him that our only danger would consist in making any such attempt as he proposed, and that even if it *were* necessary to fly, we could not think of implicating him in the matter. "But in fact, Captain M'Dougall," I concluded, "you have been egregiously misinformed; we are as safe here as in our own house, and almost as comfortable, as you shall presently see. But there really *is* a risk, and a serious one, in your coming here armed; so return to your brig, unman your boat, exchange your pistols for your fiddle, and then come back here and take your supper with us."

The doughty Highlander was disappointed that

his scheme was not carried into effect, and still remained dubious as to our safety ; yet not pretending to act in opposition to wishes so decidedly conveyed to him, he did exactly as I had requested ; and having laid aside his instruments of death for one which imparted so much life, he returned shortly to the guard-house. We took him, as he nautically said, "all a-back," when he saw the poor prison converted into a comfortable sitting room, with many good things on the table ; and he was much re-assured by the easy way in which we were taking the whole affair. He gradually, therefore, laid aside his fears as to our being shot next morning, and towards one o'clock, after having finished supper, he was preparing to give us one of his exquisite Scotch airs, when the comandante's servant came running to the guard house, desiring the officer on guard to go and speak to him instantly. The captain soon returned, greatly flurried, and informing us, first, that we were no longer his prisoners, he begged in the next place, on the comandante's part, that I would go over and see him for a moment, he being very ill in bed.

I not only declined going to the comandante, but we both refused to go forth from our imprisonment

till we were distinctly informed of the cause of our having been treated as delinquents. The Captain carried over this message, and returning, said that if both of us would go over to the comandante, he would give us every satisfaction, and at all events that he earnestly desired we would hear what he had to say. We therefore went over, escorted by two soldiers, (on which we insisted,) and the captain. We found the poor comandante in great distress both of body and mind, exclaiming that he was lost and ruined if we did not drop the affair at once, and return to our own house, as if nothing had happened. He had been shocked beyond measure, he said, on recovering his lost senses, to hear of what had happened ; he made a thousand apologies ; we knew, he said, that such a thing could never have happened, had it not been for the unfortunate convite ; and, in short, both for his own sake and his uncle's, he was indefatigable in his exertions to get us to hush up the affair.

But we were fixed and resolute to do no such thing ; and all we would agree to that night was, that we should retire to my cottage, and there hold ourselves as under arrest till the next morning, when the consideration of the affair was to be

resumed. We insisted on having a sentinel placed at our door, which was unwillingly agreed to; and he was to remain there till I went in the morning to the comandante's house. Our furniture was now removed once more to the cottage; and when we said good night to the inmates of the guard-house, we heard a principal spokesman say as we were leaving, "It is certain there is no stranger people under the sun than the English."

Having decided on our *ultimatum*, then, I was with the comandante at ten o'clock next morning, carrying in my hand a petition, in the usual form, praying for a passport to Corrientes.

"Mr. Comandante," said I, "as I see no possibility of our coming to a satisfactory arrangement of the disagreeable occurrences of last night, more particularly as the party who has offered us the scandalous outrage, of which you are cognizant, is your uncle, (I heard him moving in the adjoining room, having caught a glimpse of him as I entered,) I have to request you will grant me a passport for Corrientes, whither I propose to proceed within an hour to lay the matter candidly before the governor, taking care, however, to exonerate *you* from all blame."

The comandante was in a fever, and knew not what to do, but he earnestly deprecated my going to Corrientes. He wished, at the same time, to know what my demand of the governor would be. "The apprehension and committal," I said, "of your uncle Mora, on the charge of usurping the military power lodged with you, and of false imprisonment of my brother and myself." "The committal of my uncle!" ejaculated the nephew. "I dare not; indeed, I dare not take any such step." "I thought so," I rejoined, "and therefore I wish to go to Corrientes."

The comandante asked for a day's delay, which I refused; but I gave him till one o'clock to return me my passport, or place his uncle in limbo.

In the mean time the occurrences of the night were bruited about the village, and Mora's conduct was the theme of general condemnation. We were glad to hear, in particular, that old Gonzalez was quite enraged with his quondam friend, for having had the insolence to commence his proceedings in his (Gonzalez's) house: and the pretty Rosa slyly took advantage of her father's humour to remind him what friends Don Juan and Don Guillermo had always been of theirs, and

what influence they had at head-quarters in Corrientes, and how necessary for his own safety it was that her dear papa should stand clear of all imputation of having connived at so wicked an act as Mora's. When these eloquent arguments had worked their due effect on her father's mind, she threw her arms most lovingly round his neck, and added, in a tone half reproachful, half jocular, "Is this the man, dear papa, that you would have me marry? If a stupid jealousy *before* he has any control over me could lead him to such vindictive proceedings, what might I not expect from him if he had the authority of a husband over me? He shows by his acts that he has no respect for you,—no love for me; no regard to common decency: and would you consign me for life to the tender mercies of such a man? Duvàl," (here Rosa's voice faltered, and a tear dimmed her blue eye;) "Duvàl may not be the man of your choice,—but, surely, my dear father, you will never now bestow me on Mora!"

The appeal was irresistible, and old Gonzalez kissed away the tear that had bedewed the cheek of his daughter as he said, "No, my child! Mora shall never have thee; thou shalt be the wife of Duvàl!"

Rosa's arms were again round the worthy old estanciero's neck, and the tears began one to chase another in their downward course; but they were tears of silent joy, and soon gave way to the smiles which forthwith lit up her soft and pleasing features. Her younger sister was also hugging papa. The mother looked on in quiet satisfaction, seeing that the long hitch in their domestic happiness was at an end; and Rosa's oldest brother, Pèpe, a lad of fifteen, stuffed his hands into his pockets, and said he was glad she was to have him after all; for I need not say that Duvàl was the favourite suitor among the younger branches of Gonzalez's household.

In the mean time Mora began to see all the real difficulties of his position, and determined to make use of the three hours I had given the comandante for the signing of my passport: he made the latter use his influence with Quesnèy to speak to us, and endeavour to bring us to terms. Mora himself went to do the same with Gonzalez. Here they would scarcely open the door to him; and when admitted, he was met with a storm of angry words, and told never more to visit the house. Finding affairs in this untoward state, Mora went straight

to his rival Duvàl, who was as yet unaware of the happy change which had taken place in his matrimonial prospects. The enemy offered immediately to resign all pretensions to Rosa, and to leave Goya for the present, if Duvàl should succeed in dissuading me from going to Corrientes.

Full of his mission, on which he felt so much of his happiness to depend, Duvàl came in a flurry before my brother and myself, warmly to plead the cause of Mora. The fact is that the journey to Corrientes was scarcely ever contemplated by us as likely to be performed, for we made sure that such terms as would satisfy the exigency of the case would be granted by Mora. According to the custom of the country, we had set out by asking more than we intended to take; and we therefore now authorized Duvàl to say to the comandante, that if he would reprehend Mora in the presence of the parties who had witnessed the insult put upon us, and would then state that it was by our forgiveness and by no other right or plea that he could urge, he was not made legally amenable for his conduct, the business should be considered as closed.

After some negociation, these terms were pain-

fully acceded to by the defeated Mora, and Duvàl ran to Gonzalez's house to proclaim his triumph to Rosa. He then learned how matters stood; and that Rosa, with the quick diplomacy of a woman in affairs of love, had been beforehand with him, and secured that success to his constant attachment which he fancied was due to his own good management. Rosa, however, carried off her laurels with as much modesty as a little piquante turn she had of showing herself off to the best advantage would allow; and although Duvàl was laughed at as the dupe, instead of being praised as the diplomatist, he found such a consolation in the affectionate looks and tender little squeezes of the hand of his charming Rosa, that he declared he would like to be so taken in every day of his life, to be so rewarded in return.

The following morning at ten o'clock, the guard was turned out, and our friend the Captain stood at its head. Gonzalez and Duvàl were placed in front, Captain M'Dougall and our capataz at their side, and my brother and myself left our cottage at the same moment that we saw the comandante approach from his own house, accompanied by Mora. They halted when they got to the one end of the little

file of men, and so did we at the other. We stood, linked arm and arm, as if we were unconcerned spectators of the scene. Then the comandante (who, by the way, was by no means disinclined to put his imperious uncle down) advanced to the front of the company, and in a very sensible and proper manner read Mora his lecture, and told him, that but for our clemency, he would have had to answer for his conduct before the governor of the province. Mora listened with a scowl on his face, and, the ceremony concluded, he set off that same day for his estancia, which he thenceforward made his permanent residence.

Very shortly afterwards Duval was united to his dear Rosa, and an excellent husband he proved to her. His father-in-law's estancia was placed under his active and judicious management, and prosperity followed his exertions; while all the family, when they saw the happiness which Rosa enjoyed as the wife of Duval, would often congratulate themselves on her escape from the misery of a union with the rich but jealous Mora.

Your's, &c.

W. P. R.

LETTER XXV.

THE AUTHORS to GENERAL MILLER.

Don Pedro Campbell's Services—The Winding up at Goya—The Departure—Arrival at the Guasú—Wasting of Time—The Pacú—An Arrival on Board of the San José—Mr. E——, the Under-writer—The Isleria—The Carboneros, or Charcoal-Burners—The Caracoles—Sea Sickness—Arrival in the Outer Roads—The Chacarero and his Spouse—An Equestrian Fête—The Cockney Equestrian—Buenos Ayres Road and Pantanos—A Coach preferable to Horsemanship.

A DAY or two after the adventure of the guard-house, Campbell came into Goya with the last of our produce, and with all our troops of carts, which were laden with it, and marshalled behind him. He rendered us a faithful account of his operations, and seemed much to regret that his stirring campaign was at an end. We shall by and bye give some account of his further career; but we cannot take leave of him here without saying that, wild and irregular as he was in his ways, and in many of his doings, no man ever served us in South America with more honesty, tact, and zeal than he.

The paying off of our capataces, peons, and ser-

vants of every kind, was like the disbanding of a little army; and as we sold off our "munitions of war," without straining for a price, they were soon dispersed among the *Campesinos*, or country people, to be again usefully employed in the service of the province.

Our approaching departure, I may safely say, was viewed with general regret; and, from the many parties who had congregated around us, we not only had the heartiest good wishes for our future prosperity, but the warmest desire expressed that we should soon return to the province.

Poor Don Pedro Quesnèy, as we went on making our concluding arrangements, gave us many of his own peculiar tokens of regret: our friend Tuckerman (who had been in high spirits ever since the Quartèl affair), protested over and over again that the pain of his separation from us would only be inferior to that which he had felt on leaving Washington and Charlotte behind him; and Campbell made up his mind to allow twelve months to intervene before he returned to the service of "Pèpe," in the hope that the return of one or other of ourselves would again place him at the head of the Gaucho commerce of the province.

Everything being ready for our departure, in October, 1816, we struck our camp at Goya. The village population assembled at the river side to see us set sail, and after many repeated and hearty adieus, we committed ourselves once more to the surface of the glassy Paraná. The goleta Nuestra Señora del Carmen, as the smaller vessel, and therefore drawing the least water, took the lead of the more majestic San José, which followed in the wake of her avant courier. We had the privilege of hoisting the English flag, in consequence of having received from the British commander on the Buenos Ayres station, what is technically called a "sailing letter," or passport for ourselves as British subjects, and for our property as that of a neutral and friendly state. We were so deeply laden, and so fully stowed, that we had only a little hole or crevice left for our personal accommodation between the after part of the cargo and deck. But we had by no means room to stand upright in this crevice. We lived, therefore, on the top of the troxa, or deck cargo, with an awning over us; and the splendid weather of the finest spring month which South America affords (October) enabled us to spend the whole passage

without being once forced into our dingy and confined apartment below. We dined on the troxa, we read and wrote on the troxa: we dressed, undressed, and slept on the troxa; and on the troxa we smoked our segars and drank our Cognac, diluted with the pure water of the Paraná. We were laden to the river's edge: scarcely a plank of the vessel was to be seen above it, and we looked like the floating roof of a house, or rather like a stack of hay with masts and sails, swept onwards by the flood. Both vessels generally "brought up," in naval phraseology, at night-fall; and then the fires blazed, the Paraguay peons leapt gaily on shore; the beef was roasted for supper; out came the segar and the maté; round went the joke and the laugh; then came forth the guitar to accompany the song; and then, best of all, came sleep,—sound sleep,—to refresh the weary, to minister day dreams of never-to-be-realized happiness to the sanguine, and to throw the mantle of oblivion over the petty cares of happily the unfortunate few who allowed their working moments to be discomposed by the incidental rubs and hardships common to all, but only formidable to the disconcerted or faint of heart.

We had a fine passage, being favoured all the way with a north wind, which is the best, and, indeed, the only good one for descending the Paraná. But this wind, while it augments the rapidity of the current, causes a considerable fall in the river, and consequently renders navigation more difficult. With all our own *vaqueano*'s care, the *San José* got aground on a bank, and we were obliged to unload many bales from the *troxa* before we could get her off again.

But, although this *contretemps* lost us two days, we arrived on the ninth from that of our leaving Goya at the principal mouth of the river, called the Paraná *Guasú*, in contradistinction to the Paraná *Miní*, or Great and Little Paraná. The former dis-embogues in the Uruguay, and forms the deepest outlet and the best for large vessels; the latter falls into the River Plate itself, and is a more direct communication with it.

The whole navigation of the Paraná from the village of San Pedro, which stands on its banks, to its various *desembocaduras* or mouths, is not a little intricate and ramified, rendering it difficult for a vessel which is going against the current to get over *las Nueve Vueltas* or nine windings, in which the

wind, to be fair, must blow from every point of the compass. The *Paraná de las Palmas*, although wide, is only navigable by small vessels, and the other branches, which flow into the River Plate between the Paraná Guasú and the Paraná de las Palmas, are intricate and dangerous in the extreme. Another curious part of the navigation is that of the *Caracoles*, which we shall have to mention by and bye. Of the river Uruguay it is not our province here to speak, but a reference to the map will show how much wider it is, a considerable way up, than the Paraná, although the former can only be viewed as a tributary stream to the River Plate, while the Paraná, or more properly the Paraguay, is the trunk or parent of the mighty confluence of waters which at last mingle with the Atlantic Ocean, at the huge mouth of the Rio de la Plata.

We called nowhere on our voyage, except occasionally at estancias for fresh provisions. Although nothing at the time was to be apprehended either from the authorities or the troops on either side of the river, and although the freebooters had been dispersed and were mostly working as peons on the different estates, we had suffered too much from irregular, unlawful, or violent aggression, willingly

(except in a case of emergency) to put ourselves in the power of any. We speeded our quiet and unobtrusive course, therefore, without anything to remark upon but the silent beauties of the Paraná. These, however, as well as the mode of navigation, both aguas arriba (up the river) and aguas abaxo (down the river) have been so fully described in our work on Paraguay, as scarcely to bear repetition here.

On arrival at the Guasú, then, our intention was to tranship to launches the troxa, or deck part of the cargoes of our two vessels, and then let them proceed with the remainder to Balizas, the port, or rather "inner roads," of Buenos Ayres.

This was eventually done ; but as it was necessary, before we quitted our fastness, among trees, shrubs, and islands in the Guasú, to ascertain that the way was clear of enemies and other obstructions in the open river,—or, what it is more like, the high sea,—of the Rio de la Plata, we despatched a messenger in the Saint Joseph's long boat to our friend and partner, Mr. Fair, to announce our arrival and learn how we were next to proceed.

While we lay at the Guasú we beguiled the hours in the best way we could,—now with our

books, now going ashore and ranging among the interminable intricacies of the islands ; at one time with a gun among the feathered tribes, at another with a line among the finny race. The north wind by its duration, continued increasing the heat, and rendering the attacks of the mosquitos during the evening less and less supportable. What provoked us quite as much, was our knowledge that it was retarding the return of our long-boat, or of any other water-borne conveyance which might be coming to release us from our quarantine.

At length, on the third evening, as we were exulting over the capture of a magnificent *pacù*,—a kind of fresh-water turbot, and a very delicious fish,—we heard the distant sound of voices and splashing of oars. After an hour's anxiety, now losing and now again catching the sounds as they were wafted to us on the breeze, they became at last so distinct that we could hear ourselves hailed by the well-known voices of Mr. Fair, and of his and our old friend Mr. E——. With the former, he had resolved, to be one of the first to welcome us back to Buenos Ayres. As their boat, though with a covered deck, drew little water, their pilot had entered one of the many arms of the

Paraná, as affording an easier and more direct communication with the point where we lay. This was behind a small island near the mouth of the Guasú, and our approaching friends had so many doublings and windings of the river to master, that we were hailing each other nearly for an hour before they got to us, or before the deep foliage of the intervening trees would allow us to see each other.

When at last they emerged from the shaded stream, and came suddenly upon us, Mr. E _____ viewed with great surprise the housetop on which we walked, and with no small difficulty we had him hoisted up to the upper and artificial deck of the San José; but when fairly there, all the discomforts of the passage up were forgotten, both by him and by Mr. Fair; and on both sides the welcome was very cordial.

Mr. E _____ was then, as during an unbroken residence of thirty years in Buenos Ayres he has continued to be, a general favourite with his countrymen there. He was, at the time of which we speak, a stout, middle-sized, easy-going gentleman, turned of forty; and even at this early stage of his career, from a certain quietude of manner about him, aided, perhaps, by the paternal interest he

took in the welfare of all his younger friends, he went by the familiar name of "Old E——." His good nature was proverbial, his kindness of heart unbounded ; and a tinge of melancholy (caused by domestic sorrows not to be lightly touched upon), often in the midst of gaiety overspread his features, and gave him an additional interest in the hearts of his friends.

Mr. E—— came to Buenos Ayres in 1811 in a fine ship, called the George Canning, and he was fellow-passenger with General San Martin and Mr. Kendall, and this gentleman's two amiable and handsome young sisters, the Misses Kendall. Before arriving at Buenos Ayres, Mr. E—— loved the George Canning, San Martin, Mr. Kendall, and especially the Misses Kendall, all as if they had been his own children.

Our friend had been long well known and respected in London as a member of Lloyd's, and after many years of under-writing, he became not merely a living Lloyd's register, but one of the most astonishing instances which has ever come within our knowledge of what a retentive memory, carefully and habitually directed to one point, will do. Mr. E—— got by degrees acquainted with

the whole history in detail, of nearly every British vessel, and of many a foreign one, registered in Lloyd's books. The fund of information which this study of ships and their movements brought with it was immense,—often entertaining, and sometimes highly interesting. It included the most extensive geographical acquirements, a knowledge of the trade and productions of every known country,—shipbuilding and nautical improvements,—with histories of shipwrecks, barratries, piracies, jettisons, and many other incidental and stirring matters connected with the great question of British mercantile navigation.

If at a bachelor's table a vessel was incidentally mentioned, Mr. E—— would fall into a brown study, fix his eye steadily on the cornice of the room, smoke his segar more earnestly, and swallowing, after a time, a glass of port wine (albeit an abstemious man), he would then pour quietly forth the history of the vessel in question; where she then was, where she had last been, where and by whom she was built, her cargo, her master, her owners, her age, her "*letter*," and then her retrospective history, including generally something extraordinary or interesting which had occurred in

some one or other of the many distant **voyages** which our narrator graphically, because naturally, laid before us.

But though Mr. E——, to all appearance, was the most quiet and easy-going man in the world, he was a veritable enthusiast in his calling. He had no exclusive commercial affairs of his own, but his joint adventures with his friends were many. These generally originated in his love of chartering vessels. Every captain and every consignee hastened to E—— when they wanted a charter; and very amusing it was to see the earnestness, the indefatigable perseverance, with which he ran from one place to another till he had accomplished his purpose. This he almost invariably did. If necessary, he was ever ready to chalk out, as well as to take, a share in any adventure which involved the pleasurable necessity of chartering a vessel. In short, this was his hobby,—and never did Italian music sound sweeter in the ears of a dilettante than did in E——'s the words of "Pray look out for a vessel for me."

Mr. E—— was a Londoner, and like not a few of the better class of them, he had some distinctive features of the Cockney,—one, among others, to

which we shall presently have to revert, being an antipathy, which nothing in nature could ever overcome, to become an experimental equestrian.

When our mutual congratulations were over, and Mr. E—— had sat quietly down with his segar to consider of his whereabouts, his eyes fell on the pacù, and after an intent gaze upon it, he exclaimed, "Upon my honour, John," (addressing one of us,) "unless my eyes deceive me, I see at the other end of your hide deck as fine a turbot as ever was brought to Billingsgate!"

"My worthy friend," replied John, "it is a pacù, a fish you never see at Buenos Ayres; we propose to have it broiled entire for your supper, that you may judge whether the San José at the Guasú can come into competition with the "smacks at Billingsgate Stairs." Both our visitors partook of it largely and relished it highly.

The north wind which had blown us all the way from Goya, and which we still wanted to carry us down to Buenos Ayres, was evidently drawing to a close, and we therefore determined to make all speed to Las Conchas, a port situated on the river of that name, used by the smaller vessels navigating the Paraná, and about nine leagues north-west

of Buenos Ayres. We preferred steering for **Las Conchas**, because our navigation to it lay through narrow channels, and therefore was not exposed to the pampero, should it come on, save at one part, the crossing of the mouth of the Paraná de **las Palmas**, a short distance of open waters.

At dawn, therefore, of the day which followed that of the arrival of our friends, we left the **Guasú** and the **San José**, though with a surcharged atmosphere and lowering clouds, portending a storm. We converted the hold of our little launch, the **Clyde**, into our cabin, laying the floor of it with mattresses and blankets, but none of us could stand upright in it, and least of all our friend Mr. Fair, who boasted of a stature of six feet two or three inches. We hoped, however, to get into **Las Conchas** the same night, so we cared the less about the accommodations of the **Clyde**. She was said, we must observe, to be unfortunate in all her passages, and truly it turned out that our present one was to be no exception to the general rule.

We wended our way through all the intricacies of the **brazo** or arms which connect the **Paraná Guasú*** with the **Paraná Mini**.† They form

* The great Paraná.

† The little Paraná.

what is called *la Isleria* or clump of islands, which are covered with orange, peach, and other trees. From these, in summer, are gathered great quantities of fruits, and, throughout the year, large supplies of charcoal are made, both of which commodities are carried to the Buenos Ayres market in boats.

Emerging finally from a small arm of the Paraná, we fell into the great River Plate, opposite to the highest of three clustering islands which run parallel with what appears to be the main land (although also an island) formed by the Paraná Mini and Paraná de las Palmas. The channel formed by these little islands, running from the former to the latter mouth of the Paraná, is called the Caracoles or Windings; and so narrow are they in many places, as simply to allow the passage of a boat and no more along their tortuous course.

We entered this most picturesque and beautiful of all inland navigation towards the evening. The boughs of the trees formed ever and anon a canopy over our boat's little mast, and the foliage often protruded in such a way as to enable us to break off branches on both sides at once. The wild flowers and evergreens, the air plants and orange

blossom threw out a fragrance which embalmed the atmosphere; and the infinite variety of green mingling with flowers of every hue, together with the singing and chirping of thousands of birds in a thousand varieties of the most exquisite plumage, gave the scene altogether the appearance of a fairy land—of which we may dream, but of which it is never supposed we can possibly see the reality.

As we advanced through the Caracoles the shades of night fell upon us, rendering it extremely desirable that we should, without loss of time, get out of our pent up winding passage. The scenery gradually began to lose its charms for us, and we did not think the better of our staggering along in the dark, that we came here and there upon some suspicious looking characters in the shape of *Carboneros* or charcoal burners, squatted on the main island or left bank of the deep but narrow canal through which we were passing. They were the most ferocious looking fellows imaginable. Their swarthy and brawny limbs were covered to the knee with the chiripà or kilt; a poncho was thrown over their shoulders; their faces were blackened and begrimed with the smoke of the charcoal; and their bushy jet black beards, whis-

kers, and mustachios, added not a little to the fierceness of their aspect. The charcoal furnaces threw their deep red glare upon the savage figures of these carboneros, and gave every one of them the appearance of "the very best of cut-throats." They had erected the rudest kind of huts, formed from branches of the trees, and covered with hides, which were their homes. Many were accompanied by their wives, as uncouth as themselves; and half if not wholly naked children were ever and anon to be seen at their gambols round the fires.

Though romance might wish it otherwise, truth compels us to say that the carboneros molested us not. We were, as the reality proved, all safer than each in his heart believed himself to be. Mr. E. looked as if he would not take "a line" on the Clyde under 60 per cent.; and though more accustomed to the "natives," Mr. Fair and we began to think that a comfortable parlour in Buenos Ayres was preferable to a midnight survey of the carboneros' dwellings on the margins of the Caracoles.

By the time we got through these windings, the night had far advanced, and the now constant gleams of lightning which illumined the heavens,

and the still distant yet constantly approaching low rollings of the thunder, told us that we were meeting a storm. Our skipper deemed it imprudent to keep longer among the islands and shoals, and on clearing the Caracoles, determined to stand straight on in the open river for Buenos Ayres. He was an Italian,—a thorough sailor, and altogether fearless in his boat, though he had only one man and a boy to assist him in its navigation.

We had advanced but a short way in our travesia, or crossing from the Caracoles to Buenos Ayres, when the storm broke over us with appalling fury. The lightning, now forked, now in one unbroken sheet of dazzling light, shot over our heads, and the thunder cracked around us in a startling and deafening succession of the loudest peals. The pampero whistled wildly over our cutter, laying her completely on one side, and causing her to reel and stagger over the surface of the troubled waters; while a slanting rain, driven impetuously by the domineering hurricane, completed the war of the elements, which, now lashed into madness, raged around us.

In truth we do not think *Æolus*, whatever he might say of the other winds, could allege of the pampero—

“ Hic vasto rex Æolus antro
Luctantes ventos, tempestatesque sonoras
Imperio premit, ac vinclis et carcere fremit.”

We were in very great peril ; but the sang froid with which our skipper gave his orders, and the activity, devoid of bustle, with which he helped to carry them into execution, gave us somehow a feeling of security as great as if we had been still in the smooth Caracoles. Only one thing distressed our *Palinurus*. Poor Mr. Fair, being a bad sailor, was very unwell from the tossings and tumblings of our boat. His only relief consisted in standing upright in the hold, with his head high above the hatchway, and inhaling, with the pelting rain, the cold fresh biting air of the pampero. Whenever he was perceived, he was called to order by our skipper, who addressed him always thus :— “ Ah, Don Tomas ! do me the favour—do *go below*—you are sadly in my way—do *go below*—pray close the hatch.” Going below meant that poor Fair should double himself in two, and give sickness the mastery over him. As for Mr. E. he gathered himself into a couple of blankets, made a pillow of a sack of biscuits, coiled himself up in a corner, and went to sleep. Mr. Fair could seldom endure his penance for more than ten mi-

nutes together ; up went the hatch, down came the rain, and, through the howling of the wind, the mild remonstrance of the patron was heard, “ Ah, Don Tomas ! there you are again ! Do me the favour—pray *go below.*”

We were buffeted about during the whole night, our skipper tacking with no small skill from one point to another. At one time, on our calling out to know whereabouts we were, he answered, to our astonishment, that we were in the outer roads of Buenos Ayres—right among the shipping ! He cleared us of this danger with his usual dexterity, perseveringly assisted by his man and his boy, and in an hour or two after we were again up the river, near the *Isleria*.

The long and tedious night,—of painful suffering to our friend Mr. Fair, of somewhat broken repose to Mr. E., of incessant labour and fatigue to our little crew, and of positive danger to us all,—passed at length away, though at dawn the terrific gale had in no degree abated. It lulled, however, during the morning, when the rain fell in torrents more unbroken than before ; and at last the contest between the two elements seemed gradually to waste the strength and fury of both. Under these cir-

cumstances, and being most desperately tired of the storm-tossed little Clyde, we gave the skipper positive orders to run us ashore wherever he most conveniently could, and this he effected towards mid-day on the open beach, opposite to a pretty little chacara, or farm, not far from the village of San Isidro, the farm-house standing romantically embowered among trees and shrubs on the barranca, or cliff, which at some distance from the shore here runs along the River Plate. A meadow ground intervenes, and the beach is formed of a quasi-rock, called tosca.

The pampero having blown the water off its wide-spreading shoals, towards the centre or bed of the river, we had a long way to walk over the rock, and wade through occasional pools, before we reached the beach. Mightily pleased were we all when we found ourselves on terra firma, and no time did we lose in hastening up the barranca, and making ourselves at home with the characero and his buxom wife. Mr. E., after surveying their nice white-washed house, their orange trees in blossom, and their wide-spreading vine trained over a trellised walk; after clapping the farmer heartily on the back, and nodding repeatedly and smiling with

an expression of the blandest affection to the wife,—not being a great adept at Spanish ;—after doing all this he quietly drew a chair from the sala and placed it under the veranda, produced his segars, asked for a glass of water, of which he always drank copiously, and sat down as much at home as if he had been under his own paternal roof. Totally absorbed in the new scene around him, Mr. E. seemed to have banished from his thoughts every trace of the dangerous struggle in which we had just been engaged with the warring elements.

Our friend, wherever he sat down, was at once at home, and he never seemed to have the least desire to change his quarters. He showed no inclination to make the present case any exception to the general rule ; and he was, perhaps, the more intent on evincing that he had made up his mind to remain where he was for the present, that he had overheard us conning over the best mode of getting him to town without delay, which was only to be done *on horseback*.

As he sent up, therefore, into the now placid air the curling smoke of his segar, he watched with no small anxiety our communings with the chacarero.

He fancied they boded him no good, and he, accordingly, thought it right to expound his own views.

“Well,” said he, turning round to us, “we’ve had a rough time of it, but certainly we could not have landed at better quarters than these. I never saw a prettier place, and I am sure we shall all have better beds to-night than we had last night; and I think it would be very well to send a messenger immediately for a coach, so that we may set off comfortably in the morning.”

In answer to this, we began by showing Mr. E. the impossibility of any coach travelling through the roads, rendered totally impassable by the torrents of rain which had fallen during the last twenty-four hours. The whole country was inundated, and on horseback alone could we hope to get to Buenos Ayres.

At first our worthy friend wholly repudiated the notion of his mounting a horse, and treated our proposal of his doing so as a mere joke; but we plied him very hard, and got him by degrees to look to the astounding reality of his travelling twelve miles on the back of a wild South American colt. The chacarero’s wife, seeing our great anxiety to proceed, and perceiving the difficulty

which lay in the way, came opportunely, after an hour's argument on the subject, to strengthen our position. "Tell the gentleman," said she, "that as he is afraid of a wild horse, he shall have mine, on which I go to mass and market, and which is as tame as a lamb and as easy as a feather bed." We redoubled our attack, and poor Mr. E., unable longer to oppose us, but evidently labouring under great trepidation of mind, consented at last to mount the lady's *cavallo de misa*, or tame church-going horse.

The house, as we have said, was situated on the front of the barranca, or cliff, and the horses were all saddled and drawn up before the verandah. It was with much difficulty we constrained our mirth on glancing at our agitated friend. To re-assure him, the farmer placed a chair at the side of his wife's horse, mounted, dismounted, walked under the gentle animal, lifted its legs, shoved it about, and showed that it was impossible to every feeling save one of quiet indolence. At length the chair was left for Mr. E. to mount, and the passive cob was pushed up to the side of it. Supported to the chair by Mr. Fair and the farmer, our anti-equestrian companion stood there like a condemned

criminal, unable to make the requisite sign to the finisher of the law; and at last Mr. Fair was obliged to lift up Mr. E.'s foot to the stirrup, and to help his body into the saddle as he best could.

The chacarero was at the head of the horse, which stood immovable during the operation. "Now tell him to stand where he is," said Mr. E., "I'm not ready yet,—don't let him leave the horse's head,—don't let him move." We got the reins at last into our equestrian's hand, and the chacarero retired; but the moment he did so the former let go the reins and took hold of the horse's mane. The animal stood stock still; but Mr. E.'s fears were not the less for that. "Take me off!" he cried, "he's going to run away! See how he's looking at the barranca!" The farmer's wife could hereupon contain herself no longer, but holding her sides, she broke into uncontrollable laughter. Her mirth overthrew at once our long suffocated attempts at gravity; and so the honest chacarero, his plump and good-natured wife, Mr. Fair, and our two selves, stood round the horse and relieved ourselves of the pent-up laughter which for nearly an hour we had been keeping down. But our unseasonable hilarity only raised poor

Mr. E.'s fears into an agony of terror. "Don't laugh!" he exclaimed, most earnestly, "for God's sake, gentlemen, don't laugh! I'm sure you'll frighten the horse! Do you wish to see me dashed to pieces? Oh, for Heaven's sake, be quiet, and do,—do, take me at once from this animal's back!"

It was too clear that that was the only alternative left. The chair was again placed at the horse's side, the chacarero took its head, Mr. Fair gently drew Mr. E. from the saddle, who, being once more on his feet, was "Richard himself again!" Nothing could ruffle our friend's temper: with infinite good humour he allowed us to laugh and joke as we liked; *he* seriously believed he had escaped from a great danger, and he resumed his seat under the veranda with the utmost placidity, saying he knew from the first he was to dine and sleep at his worthy friend's, the chacarero's, house. When we asked him how he could possibly fancy there had been the slightest danger, he answered, that he had marked his *eye* (the horse's)—a wild eye—and he felt certain that the animal's intention, whenever he moved, was to rush down the precipice at which he was looking during the whole time of his standing at the door.

As we could not think of leaving Mr. E. alone, and in the hands of strangers, it was arranged that Mr. Fair should proceed to Buenos Ayres and order a coach, malgré the state of the roads, to carry us to the capital next day. Mr. Fair, who was as good a horseman as he was an indifferent sailor, mounted immediately and put spurs to a mettlesome animal, which, with a snort and a bound, set off at full speed,—Mr. E. waving his hand and calling out, “bon whackey, bon whackey!” meaning thereby *buen viage*, or a pleasant journey to you. “Aye,” added he, as Fair disappeared from our view, “that is the way in which the wild animal which I mounted would have bounded down the barranca, had I once allowed him to set off with me.”

Of all the roads which disgrace the neighbourhood and environs of a large and flourishing capital, those which surround Buenos Ayres must take the lead. As far out as three leagues from the city, they present, during six months of the year, the most frightful barriers which the imagination can conceive, to any safe intercourse between town and country; and whenever any heavy rains fall during the other six months, the transit becomes equally

difficult. They are neither drained, nor paved, nor raised, nor mended, by the public authorities. Turnpikes are unknown, and road trustees were never heard of. No faint echo of the immortal name of MacAdam ever reached the shores of La Plata; and when a century hence the increase of population and interior traffic shall have forced the worthy Argentines to mend their ways,—more properly, to *make* roads out of their capital into their rural districts,—the famous lines on General Wade's roads in the Highlands will be, no doubt, applied to the South American Wade of the twentieth century—

“Had you seen these roads *before they were made*,
You would lift up your hands and bless General Wade.”

The roads are formed generally by parallel lines of ditches, here and there lined with tuna (prickly pear) and aloe hedges. These so called roads run through a deep rich loam soil on the arable lands, and through marshes, with soft muddy bottom, on the low grounds. Not the slightest attempt at drainage is made, nor is there any elevation in the centre of the road from which the water could run off. It stagnates in deep ruts made by the immense bullock cart wheels; and these ruts being

thus filled and softened with rains they are left to be retraversed by the same wheels, which sink deeper into the soil. Thus are formed a succession of those things celebrated in South American topography under the name of *pantanos*. They are holes,—now dry,—now of soft mud,—anon of unyielding and sticky clay,—here forming a puddle of water, and there stretching out to a lake. They are of all depths and sizes; in one place just sufficient to catch your horse up to his knees,—in another deep enough to take him to his belly; here you may make one desperate plunge and get out of the pantano at once,—there you may flounder on for fifty, one hundred, two hundred yards,—every step you take threatening to carry you to some unknown abyss of darkness and of mud which is to swallow horse, rider, and all. Sometimes in despair you have to clamber over the deep soft ditch, at the imminent risk of your horse's legs and your own neck, into the field, in order to avoid some more terrible pantano than the rest, and then to find your way out of the field by some horrible gap which yawns between you and the road, in order to resume your pantano labours. Our readers must not fancy there is any exaggeration in this,—quite

the reverse. This passing notice gives you no adequate idea of the horrors of the roads, during winter, which lead out of Buenos Ayres; but at another time we may have occasion to speak of them more particularly.

Through such roads as we have sketched, Mr. Fair sent off to us, as soon as he got to Buenos Ayres, a coach drawn by *six* stout mules; but they could not make out the journey that day. The coach was with us, however, early the following day, relay mules had been left half way, and we left in high spirits immediately after breakfast.

We soon found, however, that we were in a much more dangerous situation in the coach than Mr. E. was on the *chacarera's* pillion horse. The roads were everywhere inundated; the pantanos were hidden under the surface of the waters; so that our mules plunged and floundered, and our crazy old vehicle reeled from one side to another, every moment threatening to lay its bones on one of the many soft beds over which it was dragged.

Mr. E. was so much at home in a coach, that all our joltings and heavings were regarded by him with utter indifference; indeed he laughed in his turn at our fears of an upset. It turned out,

however, that they were not at all imaginary, but that, whether by land or by sea, we were doomed to rough usage in our expedition from the San José to Buenos Ayres. Our muleteers having plunged into a continuous sheet of water after we had proceeded about two leagues, as we emerged from it one wheel of the coach came upon a hidden mound,—the other sank under its shelving side,—the vehicle got poised up on one side,—Mr. E.'s goodly weight slid over to the other,—the balance was irretrievably lost,—and down we came. Luckily none of us were much hurt ; the drivers opened the upper door, out of which we contrived to crawl, well drenched and muddled. After an hour's labour our vehicle was righted, and having dried ourselves in the sun, we jumbled along without farther mishap. Shortly after we were met by a gallant array of our friends, who, headed by Fair, had come out to give us the meeting ; and by them we were escorted through the streets to Mr. Fair's house,—our adventures serving to enliven the evening, which we all spent merrily together.

You will allow that there is a somewhat striking difference between a voyage from the Guasú to San

Ysidro in a sailing boat, followed up by a carriage journey thence to Buenos Ayres,—and a trip by a steamer from Havre to Southampton, and thence by railroad to London.

Your's, &c.

THE AUTHORS.

LETTER XXVI.

THE AUTHORS to GENERAL MILLER.

Great Change for the better, wrought by the Revolution in Buenos Ayres—The Portefios try to please John Bull—Their Abstemiousness rather against this—The pleasure of dwelling in large Cities—Political Importance not desired by Country Folks—Advantages of Society on a large Scale—Miseries of it on a small one.

AFTER a few days careless recreation, we naturally looked around us to see the improvements which, since 1810, had been effected, not so much by the revolution, as by the intercourse, consequent upon that revolution, of natives with foreigners.

Those improvements were not only obvious, but very striking. Everybody was dressed better, everybody lived better than before. There was an evident increase of courtesy, and decrease of distrust on all hands. The interior decoration of the houses was remarkably improved; the capital of the native merchants, through foreign trade, was evidently augmenting; and whereas the old Spaniards had been a year or two before the only depositaries of the wealth of the country, and of the confidence of

foreigners, they were now in process of being gradually superseded in these important trusts by their creole children. Young men who had never dreamt, under the old regime, of rising in the world, and only thought of the best means of raising money, to be spent in dissipation, were now standing forth in the capacity of great commission agents, or enterprising speculators. Then for the European priests, they were almost out of sight; and their places were occupied by natives of the soil. It was the same with the lawyers; and the estancieros, almost exclusively creoles, were the most rising men in the country. The Spaniards were fast fading into insignificance, or in a course of passive amalgamation with the new order of things; the most splendid and capacious habitations, which they had built at an uncountable cost, were rented by English merchants; men of the John Bull breed, and who all, more or less, carrying out with them John Bull's love of comfort, diffused among the people John Bull's love of hospitality, showed how little John Bull cared about expence, or even extravagance. This begot among the South Americans a relish for luxuries, of which they never before dreamt, and consequently led them into an expence,

which was, it may be said, "the very soul of the trade."

We must, however, do the Americans the justice to say, that while they imitated the comfortable habits of John Bull, they avoided his dissipation. Sometimes, indeed, when brought into contact with him, at a dinner party, they considered it an indispensable part of good breeding to get "half seas over :" nay, so essential did they think it to John Bull's happiness to have plenty of wine, that when they invited him to their houses, we have seen many of them, who were never known to drink on ordinary occasions anything but water, take wine, as a testimony of their hospitality, till they were obliged to leave the table under the guidance of their servants.

The South Americans, especially the better classes of them, are essentially an abstemious people, and if they *do* occasionally exceed in their eating, before the irresistible influence of a good asado, an olla podrida, or a rich fricassee, they are content, as far as their *libations* go, to moisten their repast with two or three glasses of wine. They never, when among themselves, sit over their wine, as we delight to do, after dinner. They prefer the en-

joyment of their siesta. Then in the cool of the evening, they drink lemonade, or eau sucré, smoke segars, and never even dream of brandy and water.

The most delightful sensation which we experienced on getting into Buenos Ayres, after our exile in the countries of Paraguay and Corrientes, was, that we had ceased to be observed or marked men. We do not say in a *social* point of view, for in all places we were known in this respect. We speak in a *political* point of view. In the interior, we were constrained to use every sort of minute and disagreeable caution in this latter respect, in order to avoid suspicion. We had the happy feeling, when we returned to Buenos Ayres, of being "nobody" there. The very reverse in this country we know to be the case. To be nobody in politics *here*, is death, mortification, and daily disappointment to thousands. To be a diplomatic nonentity in Buenos Ayres, after having been of a marked political importance, and though not suspected, yet always watched, in Paraguay and Corrientes, was as life from death. In the latter places every body was peeping into our actions, and taking notes of our conduct; in the former no one cared a maravedi what our conduct

was. The transition was not only emancipation, it was unbounded liberty. We began to breathe as we rode through the long streets inhabited by a hundred thousand people ; crowded with our own countrymen, saw English epaulettes and a cocked hat upon the captain of a British man-of-war ; and espied at a corner some specially awkward horsemen in the shape of his lieutenants and midshipmen.

Then we could put to sea when we pleased ; have as much finery as we liked in our house, without either the fear of an Artigueño's eye, or the dread of his sabre. There was no *Francia* there ; and we once more sat down to good cheer among our own countrymen, in our own way.

Every one knows the minutely kind inspections, the charitable remarks, and the shrewd guesses, which occupy the listless inhabitants of a rural town in England, with reference to any stranger, who, without some particular rank, honourable profession, or known fortune, dares to intrude upon their society. Still, there is, there can be, under our constitution, no political fears on the part of such an intruder. But even under this mitigated view of the case, let him emerge from such a society into that of London, (where the greatest delight of all

delights is that of sinking into whatever obscurity you please,) and see what a night-mare oppression will be lifted from his troubled breast. The first calculation which of a morning you make in a petty town, is what you must do to go decorously, and without being scandalized, through the work of the day; the last thing you ever *think* of is this, in a large one. Give us London or Paris, in the old world, and Buenos Ayres, Lima, or Mexico in the new, in which to refrigerate our over-heated spirits, after the hot vapour-bath, especially in troublous times, of inland society.

Your's &c.

THE AUTHORS.

LETTER XXVIII.

THE AUTHORS TO GENERAL MILLER.

Historical and Political Events, rapidly given, according to our original Plan—Buenos Ayres, the Matrix of the South American Revolution—Important Results of the Independence of South America—Field Marshal Beresford's and Col. Pack's Escape—El Señor Doctor Don Mariano de Moreno—The Viceroy Cisneros—The Revolution—Deposition of the Viceroy Sobremonte—Alzaga and Elio—The Accession of Cisneros—Doña Carlota de Bourbon.

London, 1842.

WE have lingered so long over South American scenes and personal adventure, that our readers, by this time, will have begun to suppose they are to look for nothing of either a political or historical nature in our present volumes. They will fancy that, bound by the spell of early reminiscence, (that is now the fashionable word,) and by the charm which surrounds the record of desultory wanderings, we are confined within the magic circle of "personal narrative," and can by no means move in a wider sphere.

But although there is, undoubtedly, a fascination in the record of early travel and adventure, and although the writer may indulge the hope

that his reader may be of an equally indolent turn of mind with himself, and content, therefore, with the scope of events which mere personal observation may embrace; yet our work would fall short of what its title indicates, were we not to go into a wider field than that which the simple incident of travel opens up.

We propose, therefore, to keep to our original plan of sketching, as we go along, the historical and political events of those sections of South America which we have visited, and with the habits, customs, and people of which we have brought our readers acquainted. And we are the more particularly inclined to do this in regard to the United Provinces of the River Plate, that there is no account of any kind in print, professing to be either a history or a political survey of the provinces, since they were erected into an independent state. Of the progress of Peru, Chile, and Paraguay, here and there a stray writer has collected some particulars, and put them together in a slight historical form. But of Buenos Ayres, the matrix of the Spanish American revolutions, we have been able to find no account of any kind.*

* Don Manuel Moreno's volume, hereafter to be mentioned, only

We shall endeavour to be brief throughout, and where no events of public importance, or stirring interest mark the progress of the republic, we shall be especially laconic. But while we pourtray the national features of the people, and delineate them in the ordinary dress which in private and domestic intercourse they wear ; and while we sketch the broader outlines of the country which is theirs, both in its natural and artificial aspect ; our picture would be incomplete, were we to omit the bolder figures which history brings upon the canvass. The political and historical events, therefore, of the River Plate republic form an essential part of the work which we have in hand.

Yet we know by experience how difficult it is to impart anything like a stirring interest to historical detail ; and in the present case we do not hide from ourselves that we lie under the additional disadvantage of having the materials, out of which we are to form our historical account, underrated or misunderstood by the generality of English readers. So little of South

brings his sketch of Buenos Ayres affairs down to December, 1810, six months after the commencement of the Revolution. The work is written in Spanish.

76 IMPORTANT RESULTS OF THE REVOLUTION.

American politics, and history, of either an authentic or interesting kind, has seen the light, that the European world has sat down with an erroneous conviction that the history of the various states of the New World is devoid of those great events which arrest the attention of mankind, and which stand out as the mighty beacons on high places, by which the statesmen of the world are to steer their course. Such readers, we have to apprehend, will sit down to our details with the foregone conclusion, that they are too petty in their nature, either to instruct or to amuse.

But it is undeniable that events are important in proportion as they are fraught or not with *results*, and their interest may be as great, in a new and unformed state of society, as in an old and settled government. To the eye of philosophy, indeed, the progress of the former offers more important matter for observation than the latter; for she, uncaptured by high sounding names, and undazzled by the glare of national grandeur, watches, with a steady look, the progress of the human race, and finds it a more curious and more interesting problem at an early stage, than when, at a later one, its intricacies are more fully developed and better understood.

Few events, perhaps, more important or more copious in their effects, have occurred, than the separation of Spanish America from the mother country ; and the detail of the struggles, of the hard fights which followed the declaration of independence, can never be considered as devoid of interest. They are incidents calculated to arouse the attention of the least inquisitive, and their ultimate results are not likely to be underrated by the candid and philosophic reader. The crossing of the Andes, by San Martin, from Mendoza ; the battles of Chacabuco, Maypù, and Ayacucho, if considered as military operations, are great and glorious achievements ; while viewed as political occurrences, they were of more importance to the world than two-thirds of the great actions fought in Europe during the last long war. The latter brought Europe to the *status quo* ; but the former brought into existence “ *a new world.* ”

So much premised, and being desirous of exhibiting a rapid view of the events which paved the way to the independence of the River Plate provinces, we must beg to carry our readers back to the capture of Buenos Ayres by Lord, then General, Beresford, in 1807. It was he who, if he sowed

not the seeds of independence, first broke up and watered the ground in which the germ of the harvest was deposited. He showed the facility of the cultivation of the soil, and the goodly fruits which the labourers in the field could not fail to reap, when the time should arrive for putting the sickle to the corn.

The long and unbroken slumber in which, like all the sister colonies, the River Plate provinces had reposed on the bosom of the mother country, was strangely interrupted by the stirring events of Sir Home Popham's romantic invasion of Buenos Ayres; and it is curious, as well as interesting, to trace the gradual steps by which the young Athens of South America was led at last to the goal of national independence.

Strange as it may appear, the first popular movement was directed by the old Spaniards themselves, under the orders of one whose irreconcilable and *undaunted* hatred of the rebellious South Americans led to a fatal termination of his own career. This fine old royalist was Don Martin de Alzaga, the Alcalde de Primer Voto, or Mayor of Buenos Ayres, one of the most remarkable men who flourished in the early part of the revolution.

Alzaga was a leading merchant, and one of the

richest in Buenos Ayres. His mind was of that commanding nature that he soon became the *facile princeps* of the community in which he dwelt.

It was Alzaga who was the main-spring of the movements which ended in the recapture of Buenos Ayres from General Beresford, by the old Spaniards; for the energy of his character gave life and animation to tamer spirits; and the indomitable courage with which he fought against all obstacles in his way, and the success with which he overcame them, gave to his followers a confidence which was the very cause of that success.

The parties who aided General Beresford and Colonel Pack in their escape, had formed a plan for declaring the independence of the country, under the auspices of England; but Alzaga contrived to get partly into their secrets, by feigning that he would lead the movement; and although Messrs. Peña and Padilla got clear off with the gallant officers just named, Alzaga fell upon several others implicated in the business, subjected them to the cruellest treatment,* and frustrated their incipient plans.

* Peña and Padilla received a pension from the British Government, as well as Lima, one of those who suffered imprisonment, but who, after his enlargement, made his way to England.

80 ALZAGA DEPOSES THE VICEROY SOBREMONTE.

But Alzaga, if he watched with an eagle eye, any attempt of the creoles to free themselves from the subjugation of Spain, was yet not of a temper to put up with an imbecile rule, even on the part of the Vicegerent of sacred Majesty. Besides, he was haughty and ambitious, and he felt, perhaps, that he had fallen upon times in which the highest rule would be safer in his own hands than in those of any other individual.

Be that as it may, Alzaga determined, at the commencement of 1807, on the bold and unheard of measure of deposing a viceroy in the person of the Marquis of Sobremonte. This man, unworthy of his high calling, behaved in a dastardly manner on the occasion of the capture, by Sir Samuel Auchmuty, of Monte Video; for the viceroy having gone to the relief of that place, and encamped outside the town, fled in dismay and confusion, as soon as it was occupied by the British troops.

It was during the absence of the viceroy from the capital, and with a knowledge of his pusillanimous conduct and total want of either military or political capacity, that Alzaga, staunch royalist as he was, determined to dethrone the representative of royalty. But he took a fatal means of executing his purpose.

As head of the municipal body, which, from the energetic character he himself had given it, possessed a powerful popularity, he convoked a public meeting, and amid the acclamations of the people, not only carried the deposition of the viceroy, but also his arrest in the Banda Oriental, by means of a force to be immediately despatched for that purpose.

“Such,” says the estimable and judicious author from whom we have taken the foregoing account,* “such was the first most popular assembly which was held in the country, and such the resolution which emanated from it.” A fatal example indeed, which was not lost sight of by the South Americans.

The viceroy was suddenly pounced upon at a little post-house in the Banda Oriental, and himself and family carried to Buenos Ayres.† His political power was given by the Cabildo to the *Audiencia*, or Court of *Oidores*, half judges, half privy councillors; and to Colonel Liniers was given the military command; while the ambitious Alzaga

* Our old and respected friend Don Manuel de Moreno, the present Minister Plenipotentiary at our Court for the River Plate Provinces, author of “Coleccion de Arengas en el foro y Escritos del Dr. Don Mariano Moreno.”—London, 1836.

† See Appendix, Vol. III.

retained for the municipality the supremacy or sovereignty, to which the other powers were ordered to hold themselves subject.

It was under this mixed,—this semi-royal, semi-republican government,—that the defence of Buenos Ayres, against the invasion of General Whitelock, was organized; with what signal success our English readers too well know. The “resolution, pride, ambition, and enterprize,” of Alzaga, carried all before them.*

Liniers was rewarded by the Cabinet of Madrid with the viceroyalty, which now became his own, unshackled by a higher local power; but the members of the municipality and the principal creoles of Buenos Ayres, with whom the real glory rested, were so parsimoniously and inadequately compensated, as to cause new discontents, and to alienate the colony more and more from the mother country.

* It will be in the recollection of the readers of “Letters on Paraguay,” that it was Alzaga, who, in the drawing up of the terms of capitulation for Whitelock, said, “throw in also the evacuation and surrender to us of Monte Video.” He was remonstrated with on the insertion of so untenable and proposterous a stipulation, when, as has been narrated, he merely said, “the worst that can happen is to withdraw it;” but in proof of his sagacity, General Whitelock signed the Convention, without any salvo whatever for Monte Video, then in our secure possession.

In August, 1808, the Cabildo, the old Spaniards, and the people at large of Buenos Ayres, decided in favour of the ancient dynasty of Spain, as opposed to the usurped power of Napoleon, and accordingly Ferdinand VII. was proclaimed, and the oaths of allegiance to him were taken with great solemnity.

But, from sinister motives, the audiencia and Liniers secretly took the French side, and soon afterwards the viceroy openly proclaimed his adhesion to Bonaparte. The Spanish party had other reasons than this for being disgusted with Liniers.* They did not like his disorderly administration, the prodigality of his patronage, the waste of the public money, and the laxity of morals which he introduced at the vice-regal palace ; added to all which, he was of French parentage, an obnoxious point with the haughty Spaniard.

The Cabildo, therefore, or more properly speaking, Don Martin de Alzaga, determined on the *deposition of another viceroy*. The mayor (Alzaga) went to Monte Video to concoct measures with the governor of that citadel, General Elio,† and this

* See Appendix, Vol. III.

† General Elio, on his return to Spain, was named Captain General of Valencia, and after the downfall of the absolute party, he was degraded and executed in 1822.

chief immediately took part against Liniers. Alzaga returned to Buenos Ayres ; once more inflamed the public mind at a meeting of the municipality ; raised forthwith a formidable tumult, rung the alarm-bell, raised the royal standard ; and the end of the whole was an incessant cry of “ Down with Liniers ! a Junta ! a Junta ! as in Spain !”

A deputation from the Cabildo waited on Liniers, and actually procured his signature to a deed of abdication. But although the whole business had been managed so quickly and secretly, as to take him quite by surprise ; it was soon found that he was a man of too much determination and energy to allow his enemies to draw a permanent advantage from a momentary alarm. The result of the fracas was the triumph of the viceroy. That very day, and ere sunset, the viceroy seized Alzaga, and several of his municipal colleagues, who, *in their robes of office*, were escorted by an armed force from the town-hall to a small vessel ; and during a cold and stormy night, they were embarked, and found themselves on their way to Patagonia, as banished men, without having even been permitted to communicate with either families or friends.

The public affairs of Buenos Ayres were now in a peculiar position. The contest for political supre-

macy lay between the viceroy and the municipality ; the strictly legal power of the former was supported by the civic troops and the leading creoles or *patricians* of the colony ; the pretensions of the latter, founded on their staunch adhesion to the juntas of the mother country, were seconded by all the Spaniards in Buenos Ayres.

By both parties the dispute was referred to the government at Madrid ; but in the meantime General Elio sent a vessel of war to Patagonia, the captain of which, with an armed force, landed, released the exiles, and carried them in triumph to Monte Video.

The Spanish government, or central junta, decided in favour of Alzaga and his party ; the municipal body was restored to all its honours, and the old Spaniards at large were informed that the mother country did not doubt of their fidelity. Elio was in particular distinguished by the Court, and a higher rank in the army conferred upon him. On the other hand, Don Baltazar Hidalgo de Cisneros, was named viceroy in the room of Liniers, who was recalled to Spain in disgrace ; and the creoles were made to feel in many indirect and insulting ways, the displeasure of the central Junta

at home, on account of their support of the legitimate authority of Liniers.

The accession of Cisneros to the viceroyalty increased among the creoles their now awakened hatred of the rule of Spain. The new viceroy's power emanated from a weak body: he exercised it with great indiscretion, and, at times, with much cruelty. He placed himself in connexion with Elio; approached Buenos Ayres with precaution and distrust; ordered Liniers precipitately to give up his command; banished all French officers; expelled foreign merchants; arrested creoles on unfounded suspicions; and caused altogether a strong feeling throughout the country against his coming rule.

But if the creoles received him with only a constrained respect, he was hailed with raptures by the Spaniards, who thought they once more saw their ascendancy secure. Yet Cisneros was encompassed by difficulties. He could not trust to his troops, who had all loved his predecessor; and he could the less count on their services that he was unable to pay them. His treasury was exhausted; and having in vain appealed to the Spanish merchants for aid, he was

at length compelled to adopt a measure which struck another and decisive blow at Spanish supremacy. This was the opening of the port to foreign vessels and foreign goods, on the payment of certain duties ;—a concession made, no doubt, to the pecuniary wants of the state ; although the vice-roy's resolution on the subject was much influenced by the powerful and eloquent pleadings of Don Mariano Moreno, in his celebrated paper, entitled, "Representation in the name of the landowners of the provinces of the River Plate, in favour of a free trade with the English nation."

Doctor Moreno was at once the most estimable, the most enlightened, and probably the purest patriot that Buenos Ayres ever produced. He was the originator of the revolution. Bold, penetrating, and intrepid,—of high principles, yet gifted with great suavity of manners ;—the irreproachable innocence of his life and integrity of his conduct, his warm heart and his unsullied honour, commanded the love of his countrymen, the respect of his enemies, and the firmest attachment of the large circle of his friends, the élite of his native city. Alas ! scarcely had he shown all his value, when he was cut short in his career. He

lived only long enough to prove to his fellow citizens, the loss which they sustained, and over which they had to mourn, when death bereaved their country of his talents and his patriotism.

Such was the man who, under a despotic vice-royalty of Spain, advocated the rights of a free trade, and who, by his earnest eloquence, was mainly instrumental in establishing them for his oppressed countrymen. The old Spaniards with much reason looked upon this great measure as a death blow to their own power, and thenceforth hating Cisneros more cordially than they ever had loved him, they left no stone unturned to ensure his ruin. Thus the viceroy became entirely isolated, losing the support of the Spanish party, while he never had been able to gain the confidence of the American.

Cisneros belonged to the naval service of Spain, and had commanded a ship in the battle of Trafalgar. He had nothing attractive in his manners or deportment. He was cold and taciturn, and with all the plainness, he had none of the engaging frankness of the sailor. He had been elevated to his present dignity by a power, the central Junta, whose duration was more than doubtful, and his precarious tenure of office, with his surrounding difficulties,

caused him to vacillate and temporize, which only made the ultimate catastrophe of the ruin of Spain more certain. "Another man of talent and decision," as Don Manuel Moreno* justly observes, "would have kept back for some time, the then threatening crisis,—Cisneros, amid his apprehensions and suspicions, only hastened it."

By way of conciliating the Americans, Cisneros took from Elio the rank which had been conferred on him, of inspector-general, and he relaxed his persecution of Liniers, whom he permitted to retire to Cordova. But on the other hand, he allowed the Peruvian viceroy's commander-in-chief, General Goyeneche, a man whose name is linked with everything which is cruel, and who was then engaged in a crusade against the Peruvian patriots, to extend his merciless fury to the inhabitants of La Paz, which depended on Cisneros; and the underhand mode of proceeding of the latter, only exasperated the Americans the more against the joint authors of the cold blooded atrocities which Goyeneche committed.

In the midst of the coming storm, Buenos Ayres

* Don Mariano Moreno, of whom we have just spoken, was his brother.

was all anarchy and confusion, as was Spain among the contending juntas ; and the South American question was further entangled by the pretensions of Doña Carlota de Bourbon, wife of Don Juan of Portugal, who, as an infanta of Spain, made pretensions to the regency of the Indies. But the views of the patriots centred more and more on the project of taking the government into their own hands ; and the state of affairs between Cisneros and the old Spaniards greatly forwarded their designs. The latter indeed began now to court the patriots, with an apparent spirit of union, in order to put down the viceroy, and create a junta in his place ; and to this effect, on the 1st of January, 1810, when the municipal elections took place, they allowed one-half of the offices to be filled by Americans, a composition of that body, which was seen for the first time since the foundation of the city.*

Yours, &c.

THE AUTHORS.

* Alzaga disdained to be a member of this mongrel body, as he called it, of civic councillors.

LETTER XXIX.

THE AUTHORS to GENERAL MILLER.

The French in Spain—The Viceroy Cisneros—Ferdinand the Seventh—The Municipal Body of Buenos Ayres—Installation of the Junta—First Acknowledgment of its Authority—The Commissioner Cardoso—Pino's Retreat—Supremacy of the Junta—Buenos Ayres Press—Oidores—Their Expulsion—Adhesion of the Provinces to the Junta—Policy of England.

London, 1842.

IN May, 1810, news reached Buenos Ayres that the victorious army of France had entered Seville, that the Central Junta had fled, that its members had been maltreated, and that the whole body, accused of having betrayed the country, had been dissolved by a tumultuous popular meeting.

Cisneros felt that his fate was no longer in his own hands, and, fearing a fatal termination of his public career, he issued a proclamation in which he declared his intention to place his authority in the hands of the people.

The old Spaniards were equally alarmed: they believed their native country to be on the point of subjugation by France, and they felt that their own

domination in the Indies must at the same time draw to a close.

The South Americans, on the contrary, were full of exultation, for they perceived that the time of emancipation and independence had arrived.

But they proceeded cautiously, moderately, and prudently in their work. They determined, indeed, to be *free*, as they themselves said, or they resolved to be *rebels*, according to the Spaniards' view of the case; but without stopping to inquire into the metaphysical distinctions between freedom and rebellion, (we called the North Americans *rebels* when they were fighting for the legitimate principles of liberty,) it will be enough to say, that the patriots threw a mantle over their real designs, and cloaked them under a regard for the very legitimacy which they were about, *de facto*, to abolish for ever. They took possession of their own rightful heritage in the name of Ferdinand VII.; and, holding the goodly prize most religiously for themselves, they professed, in doing so, to be animated only by a wish to maintain the rights of their beloved sovereign the King of Spain.

The Cabildo, or Municipality, as usual took the lead in the new movement, and issued a summons

convoking an assembly of “the principal and soundest part” of the population, to express the wishes of the people. On the 22nd the meeting was held in the upper gallery, or broad continuous balcony of the town-hall—the Bishop, Oidores, and great functionaries of the viceroyalty presiding in state; and, after a long discussion, a resolution passed by a great plurality of voices, authorizing the Cabildo to form a Junta till a meeting of deputies from the other cities and towns could be held.

The Junta was constituted ostensibly in order to watch over the interests of Ferdinand VII.; but through the town that night were to be heard exulting cries of “Spain has fallen! the rule of Spain has ceased!” as so indeed it truly had.

The Spaniards, however, made one further attempt to stop the inevitable current of public affairs: they so influenced the Cabildo as to procure it to name the viceroy himself as president, and two European Spaniards as vocales or secondary members of the Junta. But the result of this intrigue being announced to the people, the flame of popular enthusiasm instantly burst forth in a manner not to be withstood. Colonel Saavedra, having the con-

fidence of his own regiment, as well as a clear understanding with the commanders of the other corps, quietly waited on the viceroy on the 24th and advised him to *resign*, which both he and the two vocales did before night. A representation was drawn up and signed by a host of the principal inhabitants, demanding a revocation of the first election, and giving the names of those who were to substitute the viceroy and his two colleagues. Another public meeting was vehemently demanded, and this was accordingly appointed for the following day.

“The 25th of May,” says Moreno, “dawned,—the day which opened up for that country the career of liberty and perfection of the moral man, after ages of oppression,—a day which is justly counted as the greatest in its history.”

The meeting was a stormy one, and before the Spaniards would give way, significant processions of armed citizens, in front of the gallery, gave warning that further delay or new intrigue could not and would not be brooked. Cowed and disheartened, the poor Spaniards retired from the field; the representation in all its parts was carried by acclamation; and a Junta was installed, con-

sisting of seven members and two secretaries, all patriots, comprising the names of Saavedra (president), Belgrano, Casteli, and others, as members; the two secretaries being the highly popular advocates, Dr. Mariano Moreno and Dr. Juan José Paso.

This celebrated representation, which formed the ground work of the Junta's existence and power, provided for many reforms, but still that the integrity of the dominions should be preserved for Fernando Septimo. And yet one *express and precise condition* of the Act was, that within fifteen days after the installation of the Junta, an expedition of five hundred men should be equipped to protect the liberty of the provinces, to start with the least possible delay, and *the expense to be defrayed by the pay of the Viceroy, Oidores, and other functionaries.*

Great rejoicings took place on the installation of the Junta, and the 25th of May has ever since been celebrated yearly as the anniversary of the independence of the River Plate provinces. "Oh day of pure and innocent enthusiasm!" exclaims Moreno,—"of noble hopes and generous illusions!" We may readily concede to the amiable writer that it was a day of much enthusiasm and of high hopes,

and as readily alas! must we agree that time has proved it to have been a day of many illusions.

There is a little anecdote introduced here by the worthy historian from whom we have borrowed so freely, one which is so characteristic of some of the minor, (will Mr. Moreno pardon us if we add?) some of the *major* employés of South America; and the story is so well told, that we are sure our readers will thank us for transferring it to our pages.

“ Such was the uncertainty,” says Mr. Moreno, then, “ of the course which things would take, especially in the provinces, that the first acknowledgment of the Junta’s authority which came from the surrounding places, was considered an event of importance. The half ruined town of Colonia, in the Banda Oriental, led the way in tendering its obedience to the military comandante there; and Don Ramon del Pino sent in his adhesion to the Junta with every demonstration of zeal for the cause.

“ The promptitude of Pino was nothing else than self interest, for having at that moment a claim pending against the treasury, *which he wished to be paid*, as soon as that was done he entered into

plots with Elio to join in hostilities against the new government.

“The Junta, which soon discovered his perfidy, sent off in secret a vessel with fifty picked men, and a commissioner, to arrest the delinquent, and with strict orders to bring him straightway into their presence. The commissioner was one *Cardoso*, an officer who had acted an efficient part in the revolution, and who, in virtue of a sanguine temperament, a fiery face, and a large riding cloak of a shaggy baize, like the skin of a bear, which he everlastingly wore, appeared a very terrible fellow, although a very little man. Springing to the ground from the vessel the morning he arrived at Colonia, he went straight to Pino’s house, armed to the teeth, but without his troop, in order not to alarm the guilty comandante. Pino, however, warned by a twinge of conscience, by no means liked the visit, and wishing to gain time, in the hope of eluding the grasp of his guest, he provided a sumptuous breakfast for him, and for some other friends, during which not a word was spoken of the commission.

“While the meal was yet in process of consumption, Pino begged to be excused for a moment, and

left the room. Quarter of an hour passed without his returning, and then the conviction flashed across Cardoso's brain that, while he was eating his eggs and bacon, Pino was making his escape. He rushed out just in time to see the comandante taking his horse from the stable door to be off. He called to him to give himself up as prisoner. Pino threw himself into the saddle and galloped off, the other pursued him on foot, bawling and hallooing, and proclaiming him a traitor, at the utmost pitch of his voice; but he stumbled in his long cloak, fell to the ground, and there, while vainly intimating arrest to Pino, and after discharging a pistol at him, he saw him wholly disappear. Cardoso rose covered with dust and confusion, got back to his vessel, and returned to Buenos Ayres with the account of his absurd adventure. The Junta got into ill humour, and thought of punishing the commissioner; but as the matter was discussed at the Council Board, Doctor Moreno, with his usual pleasantry, said, 'I think we ought not to worry ourselves, but to say of Pino, as Cicero of the flight of Cataline, "*ex urbe vel ejicimus, vel emissimus, vel ipsum egredientem, verbis prosecuti sumus.*"'

The Junta, then, having been installed, an order

was issued that the members of the municipality and of other corporations, lay and ecclesiastic, as well as all the great functionaries of the state and general officers, should take the oath of allegiance to the quasi-regal power of the Junta, and this was administered in the following remarkable terms :—

“ Do you swear before God, and on the Holy Evangelists, that you acknowledge the Provisional Junta of the Provinces of the River Plate, *governing in the name of Don Fernando Septimo, and guarding his august rights*; that you will obey the Junta’s orders and decrees; and make no attempt, directly or indirectly, against its authority, but aid publicly and privately in maintaining its security and respect? ”

This being assented to, the administrator of the oath added,—“ If you shall so do, God be your stay, and if not, God and your country make you answerable.”

On the 30th a solemn mass with Te Deum was celebrated, after which a levee was held, at which, among all the notables of the city, the Oidores and the ex-Viceroy Cisneros attended.

These proceedings were given to the public by means of one solitary little press which then alone

existed, and which, oh mutability of human affairs !
had belonged to the Jesuits !

Monte Video, under the strict and energetic rule of Elio, refused to concur in the acts of Buenos Ayres ; and, so far from doing so, took up at once a hostile attitude. A weak act of the Junta, Mr. Moreno calls it *deference*, was to allow the greater part of the Spanish vessels-of-war stationed at Buenos Ayres to slip through their fingers, although they knew that in all probability they would soon return to make war on the young Fernando Septimo Republic.

The court of Oidores was, from the first day of the republican proceedings, inimical to them. They were staunch to the mother-country, and looked with wrath and disdain on the rebellious Junta. Having received a loose copy, "without signature, without proof of its legitimacy, and without authority," of a proclamation of the installation of the new superior council of Regency, in Spain, the Oidores sent it to the Junta demanding the recognition of the legitimate Head of the Spanish nation. The Junta refused to do so, drily alleging in its "decision," that the rights of Don Fernando were superabundantly guaranteed by the oath of alle-

giance to the Junta, of which we have already given the wording.

There were no such proud, haughty, and overbearing functionaries of Spain, in all her vice-royalties, as the Oidores. They considered their persons as sacred, and long usage had accustomed them to look on their decisions and their proceedings as irrevocable law, and to enforce them accordingly.

The Oidores of Buenos Ayres were at no pains to hide their disgust with the proceedings of the Junta, and they took every opportunity of showing it. They did not dream of their being made to pay personally and individually for such proceedings. They rested on the inviolability of their character, and doubted not that their good cause would triumph in the end.

But the people watched the contest between these arrogant judges and the Junta with the utmost anger and impatience,—to such a pitch, indeed, that one night the Fiscál del Crimen, or Attorney-general, was waylaid, and, in the language of the Junta, “received a formidable caning.” They intrigued with Monte Video, and Cisneros coalesced with them. At length their increasing boldness roused

the Junta to a sense of the immediate danger which threatened, and it was resolved to get rid both of Cisneros and the royal court of Audiencia.

Their expulsion was well managed. The ex-Viceroy and the five principal Oidores were invited to the government palace or fort, to a conference. They were so infatuated that they all went in state,—Cisneros in full uniform, and the Oidores with their gold-headed canes, thinking they were about to be reinstated in all their honours, that the Junta were ready to call *peccavi*.

They were promptly undeceived. As soon as they were ushered into the saloon, Casteli, the most decided as well as the most talented man of the Junta, rose and said, “The Junta think it proper to send your excellency and your lordships before the majesty of the throne, there to answer for your conduct.” Not a word more passed: the night was very dark, and, in profound silence, a detachment of troops, with lighted torches and lanterns, conducted the coaches of the bewildered Viceroy and Oidores to the Mole. An English vessel was in waiting to take them to the Canary Islands, dependencies of Spain; and before the public knew

an iota of the matter, the next morning the expelled viceroy and judges were sixty miles from Buenos Ayres, with a fair wind, fast leaving the River Plate never more to return.

One Oidor, less culpable than his brethren and full of years, was left unmolested; and while all was changing around him, he continued to occupy the presidential chair of the supreme court of justice. The places of the expelled were supplied from among advocates, natives of the country.

The day after the expulsion, the Junta issued a long manifesto, containing a detail of the whole proceedings. Among many grave charges gravely urged was this very odd one,—that on the occasion of taking the oaths of allegiance the attorney-general went indolently up to the table, picking his teeth *with a tooth-pick*; and that subsequently, as if to add to the insult, the Oidor Reges approached to the same solemnity, not using even a tooth-pick but his *nails*, in cleaning his teeth. These were provoking little acts of contempt, no doubt; but one cannot help smiling to find them noted with gravity in a state paper addressed to the nation.

While the Junta, however, disposed of its domestic enemies, as we have related, it was pressed and

harassed by exterior foes. The governor of Monte Video, Elio, blockaded Buenos Ayres with all his maritime force, and Cordova, stirred up by Liniers, who continued faithful and active in the cause of the mother-country, rose up in arms against the government of the patriots; their hostile movements being in combination with those of Elio, on the one hand, and of Goyeneche, in Peru, on the other.

The Junta, nothing daunted, sent a force of twelve hundred men against the Cordovese insurgents, who were headed by Liniers, and they bade defiance to Elio and his blockading squadron. What was less wise, they sent eight hundred men under General Belgrano, one of the vocales of the Junta, against Paraguay.

Though Paraguay, however, Cordova, Monte Video, and two or three places in Upper Peru, held out, the great proportion of the provinces gave in their adhesion to the new order of things as established in Buenos Ayres, the metropolis of the viceroyalty.

And it may also here be remarked, that though now in alliance with Spain, England quietly favoured the separation of the colonies from the

mother-country, finding her account in a direct and rapidly increasing trade; and the British merchants, by this time established in Buenos Ayres, began to exercise a beneficial though quite indirect influence over public affairs and public opinion at the seat of government.

We are, &c.,

THE AUTHORS.

LETTER XXX.

THE AUTHORS to GENERAL MILLER.

The Pampero of 1810—The Mercurio Frigate—Elio rejected—Vigodet—The Junta refuses to acknowledge the Regency—Liniers defeated near Cordova—His Death—General Balcarce—His Victory at Suipacha—The Provinces of Peru—Blockade of Buenos Ayres—Captain Elliot—The Misletoe and Captain Ramsay—The Executive composed of twenty-two Members!—Cornelio de Saavedra—Doctor Moreno named Minister to England—His Death.

London, 1842.

WHILE the Spanish frigate Mercurio lay in the outer roadstead of Buenos Ayres, blockading the port, a pampero, or south wind, very nearly placed her in possession of the patriots. Of the pampero we have often had occasion to speak. On this occasion, July, 1810, its strength and fury rose to those of a hurricane, and blowing steadily from one point during the first forty-eight hours, its force seemed to increase in a geometrical ratio. Its effect is always to produce a low river, sweeping the waters into the sea with an irresistible impulse and rapidity ; but in the present instance it so far exceeded its usual powers, that in the morning after

its commencement the inhabitants of Buenos Ayres were astonished by seeing the captains of English vessels, which were anchored from seven to nine miles off the town, walking on foot to the shore,—the whole intermediate distance being perfectly clear of water, and their vessels, as well as the Mercurio frigate, lying high and dry on the sands.

The River Plate, spreading out at the distance of one hundred and fifty miles from its mouth into an inconceivably large estuary,—in fact, into a fresh water sea,—is at Buenos Ayres thirty miles in width; yet in one night the pampero dried up this immense space of waters, supplied from both the rivers Paraná and Uruguay, leaving only a narrow current, the mother-bed on the north side, and all the rest being reduced to one hard dry bank of sand. It is when Nature works on a large scale, as she does throughout South America, that her phenomena strike us with wonder and awe.

Seeing the Mercurio lie powerless and capsized in the sands, a resolution was taken to attack her with troops and artillery, and the plan only failed of success from the time wasted through the fears and procrastination of Saavedra, who ordered and counter-ordered till the time for action had gone by.

On the third day the river had again filled, and resumed its usual appearance.

The Regency having been named at this time by the Central Junta of Spain, one of its first acts was to recall Elio from Montevideo and to name General Vigodet in his place. At first it was thought that this was a step towards a reconciliation on a liberal basis with Buenos Ayres; but it was soon perceived that there was no real change in the views of Spain, and still less a wish to come to *any* terms on the side of the patriots. Elio was rewarded when he went home, and Vigodet was a man equally imbued with a hatred of South American patriotism,—equally resolved to maintain the entire and unqualified predominance of the mother-country. Elio himself was afterwards named—vain appointment!—viceroy of Buenos Ayres.

On the 14th of August one Rivera, a naval captain, was sent to Buenos Ayres to notify the installation of the Regency; but after some coquetting on both sides, he was dismissed by the Buenos Ayres Junta, and the Regency remained unacknowledged.

The force which we have mentioned as having been sent against Cordova was increased as it ad-

vanced by many volunteers; and as the expedition approached Cordova, Liniers and the other royalist chiefs saw more and more clearly that the people at large were against them, and that their situation was critical in the extreme. In fact, the leaders of the insurrection against Buenos Ayres saw safety for themselves only in flight, and accordingly, on the 1st of August, Liniers, the Governor of Cordova, the Bishop Orellana, the Minister, Assessor, and many officers of rank, fled with a force of about three hundred men (which gradually deserted from them) towards Peru. On the 5th a detachment of three hundred men of the patriot army entered Cordova, and General Ocampo, who commanded it, on hearing of the flight of the royalist leaders, set off instantly at the head of seventy-five men in pursuit of them. His forced marches were so rapid that, on the afternoon of the third day, he got to the post-house, whence the hotly-pressed fugitives had set off in the morning: they had abandoned their carriages and dispersed by different roads. Ocampo followed them up, and at midnight, perceiving a glimmering light in a wood, he made for it, and there, seizing some servants of Liniers, he made them confess that their master was in a cottage hard by, whither a few men were

immediately sent to apprehend him: they approached in silence and darkness, broke suddenly into the hovel, and secured the unhappy chief, together with a canon of the cathedral of Cordova. That same night all the others were taken in another cottage, and the bishop was secured the following day.

Liniers, and the other heads of the insurrection, already named, were summarily tried by military law, which means by no law,—found guilty of treason, and,—it was the first good blood shed in the revolution,—they were all shot. Colonel Allende, one of them, was a creole belonging to one of the first families in Cordova, and whose nephew soon after received a colonel's commission in the patriot army. The bishop very narrowly escaped sharing the fate of his companions.

The execution of these high functionaries caused a great sensation. In truth, the *right* of the patriots to execute them at all was *highly* equivocal; but the patriots were glad to see, at any rate, energetic proceedings on the part of the Junta, even where their legality was more than dubious; and the body accordingly began to come into high favour with the people.

The progress of the forces of the Junta, after the

overthrow of Liniers and of the Spanish party in Cordova, continued up to the end of the year to be one of almost uninterrupted success. General Don Antonio Balcarce was sent to supersede Ocampo in the command of their troops. As they advanced towards Upper Peru, one important place and province after another joined the popular cause; and as they hied onwards, the forces which opposed them fell back upon Potosi. The patriots were now commanded by General Balcarce just named, a brave and good officer; and, to strengthen the cause, the Junta, in September, sent off to the headquarters of the army Dr. Casteli, the energetic member of the Junta already mentioned, in the quality of High Commissioner, to whose orders the Commander-in-Chief was subject.

In October the patriots occupied Suipacha: on the 23rd of that month they suffered a repulse without dishonour at Cotagaita; but this slight misfortune was amply repaid on the 7th of November by the action which they gained at Suipacha, and which opened up the whole of Upper Peru to their victorious arms.

“ The provinces,” says Dr. Casteli,* “ of the

* In a dispatch to the Junta, dated 28th November.

Royal Audience of Las Charcas, viz. Potosi, La Plata, Cochabamba, and La Paz, even to the boundary of the viceroyalty of Lima, are in perfect tranquillity, concord, acknowledgment of and obedience to the governing Junta of the capital of the River Plate. La Paz, after the rout of Colonel Pierola between Oruro and Sicasica, recovered its energy and took the oaths of obedience to the Junta. We have obliged General Goyeneche, commanding the army of the viceroy of Lima, to keep within his boundary of the Desaguadero, under a promise of not advancing on our territory; though, for greater security, our own troops occupy the banks on this side of the lake."

When we consider the vastness of the continent,* its rugged features, its mountains, its deserts, its total want of resources, certainly these were mighty doings for a young and inexperienced republic to achieve in five months from the day of its springing into life, or dreaming of such chivalrous undertakings.

From the other provinces, which fell into the republican lap of the fostering mother of the revo-

* The Desaguadero is about one thousand and eighty miles from Buenos Ayres.

lution, we must select Cochabamba, as distinguished by one of those singular events which revolutions only can call into existence.

When the Cochabambinos rose up against the Spanish authorities, many of the women followed their husbands to the field of Sicasica, and there, combating by their side, died in a hard-fought and bloody engagement with an army of superior force led by Goyeneche. In commemoration of so heroic an action, and to inflame the spirit of patriotism, the adjutant of each corps, during the campaign, called at the evening muster "*The women of Cochabamba*," as if they were present ; to which a sergeant made reply, "*They died in the field of honour.*"

At Buenos Ayres the question of the legality of the blockade kept up by General Vigodet against the loving vassals of Ferdinand VII., in the metropolis, was warmly discussed, and the Junta was extremely anxious, and so were all the British merchants resident in the capital, that the English Government should declare the blockade to be illegal. But the British naval commander then on the station, Captain Elliot, was inimical to the patriots, and on terms of personal friendship with the governor of Monte Video, Vigodet ; and, stu-

pidly swayed by these feelings, he refused protection to British vessels attempting to go to Buenos Ayres, thus authorizing, in fact, the blockade. Elliot's conduct created great disgust in Buenos Ayres, and the Junta appealed to Lord Strangford, at Rio de Janeiro. The result was, Admiral De Courcy determined to go in person to the River Plate, in order to exact from the Spanish authorities an absolute non-interference with British vessels bound to Buenos Ayres.

He sent, as an *avant-courier*, the little schooner *Mistletoe*, commanded by Captain (then lieutenant) Ramsay ; and the resolution and energy of this officer filled the lively Buenos Ayreans with admiration of his conduct.

The case was this : — On Captain Ramsay's arrival off Buenos Ayres, he found two English brigs detained by the Spanish officer commanding the blockading squadron. Hereupon he sailed his little schooner right up to the superb Spanish frigate *Mercurio*, already mentioned, and anchored alongside of her. He then sent his first officer on board of the *Mercury* with a civil message to the captain, that if he did not, within one hour, deliver up the two English vessels, *the Mistletoe would pour*

a broadside into the Mercury. The captain of the latter fell into a fit of laughter at this threat, and told the officer who had been sent to him to go back to Lieutenant Ramsay, and make him understand that with *one gun* he could blow the Mistletoe out of the water. The officer quickly returned to present Lieutenant Ramsay's compliments, and to say that he was quite aware of the truth of the Spanish captain's allegation; but that the sinking of the Mistletoe having nothing to do with his (Lieutenant Ramsay's) orders, he should certainly give the Mercury a broadside at the end of the hour, if the vessels were not delivered up to him. The captain of the Mercury hereupon considered that if he fired even on a *schooner* belonging to Great Britain, he might involve the two countries in war. He preferred, in this view, giving up the vessels, and Lieutenant Ramsay took them in triumph into the balizas or inner roads of Buenos Ayres.

An amusing part of the matter was, that the editor of the Buenos Ayres Gazette, who was no other than Dr. Moreno, the secretary of the Junta, while lavishing his praises on the gallant bearing of Lieutenant Ramsay, designated his vessel as one "so small that it required a glass to see her on the

face of the waters," thereby enhancing, as he thought, the merit of her commander, and stating what was almost literally true into the bargain. But Lieutenant Ramsay, who was a little man himself, though brave as a lion, took this account of his vessel as a grievous insult; and though when he landed, his almost affectionate reception by all classes both pleased and flattered him, he never entirely forgave the government for their contemptuous mode of speaking of a British vessel of war.

Admiral de Courcy some time after followed; approved of what had been done; and the Junta had, in the end, their revenge on Captain Elliot.

The English trade, we may mention here, had already grown to such an extent that, in October, we find no less than sixty-eight principal British merchants subscribing liberally to the "National Library," an institution which owed its birth to Drs. Moreno and Chorroarrin.

The municipal body, one half of which consisted, as we have said, of Spaniards, continuing, to a scandalous extent, to plot and intrigue against the new order of things, the Junta suddenly removed the whole of the members in October, and replaced them with known and decided patriots. Don

Martin de Alzaga, and one or two of his intimates, were the main-springs of these sinister attempts against the authority of the Junta.

But the energies of this latter body were about to be paralyzed, during the remainder of its existence, by intrigues which led to the adoption of a very singular course at the end of the first and eventful year of the revolution.

Saavedra, as president of the Junta, like all other presidents and chairmen, was not only very jealous of his supremacy, but he used constant endeavours to widen his prerogatives, and render more and more absolute his authority. The other members of the Junta at first remonstrated in private; but at last, on the 6th of December, we find them issuing a well-written "Order of the day," which is followed by a decree enacting that, "from this day forward there shall be absolute, perfect, and identical equality between the President and the other members of the Junta without further difference than the numerical and gradual order of the seats;" and neither President nor members were to have any public representation, escort, guard, or other distinction beyond that of the citizens at large. The document states that the President's "moderation was very much morti-

fied" by the honours at first decreed to his station; and that his " probity had been offended" by his health having been publicly drunk as that of "Our emperor." But we run little risk in saying, that the statements of the order of the day and the feelings of General Saavedra ran in two distinct and opposite currents.

The President and his patrician friends finding themselves thus assailed by the pure republican party, Dr. Moreno being at the head of it, they determined to embarrass the Junta in an extraordinary way. Deputies from the provinces were beginning to arrive, having been convoked by the Junta, to form the foundation of a general congress; and thirteen members had been elected in all. Saavedra put it into the heads of these *doctores* that the Junta had invited them to form part of the *executive*, and not to restrict them to mere legislative functions. The *doctores* very much relished the new reading of their powers. A solemn meeting of them all and of the Junta was held; and, by a great plurality of votes, the motion was carried, "That the members of congress be incorporated with, and do form a part of, the executive government."*

* See Appendix.

Supposing that this resolution did not spring from an intrigue, (and Saavedra and his party loudly denied that it did,) of all absurdities ever committed, surely this was the greatest,—to form an executive *head* of *two-and-twenty* members! Dr. Moreno voted against the enormity; and, seeing a cabal against himself in the measure, he indignantly resigned his secretaryship, and would not, although pressed to do so, resume his seat at the board.

He was named Minister Plenipotentiary to the British court; an honourable banishment, which he accepted in the hope of benefiting his country abroad, since he was not permitted to do so at home. But his suffering was so dreadful at sea, from excessive sickness, that his strength and constitution gave way; and a very excessive dose of tartaric acid having been most incautiously administered to him, his weak frame sunk under the effects of it, and he breathed his last on board the Fame, in his thirty-third year, in March, 1811. Wrapped in an English Union Jack, his body was consigned to the waves the following day. When the news of his premature death reached Buenos Ayres, it was deplored as a national ca-

lamity; and it must be confessed that, as he was the earliest, so he was certainly one of the best of the patriots who have flourished during the South American revolution.

When Moreno's death and his burial in the sea were communicated to Saavedra, he coldly said, " So much water was necessary to quench so much fire."

We are, &c.,

THE AUTHORS.

LETTER XXXI.

The AUTHORS to GENERAL MILLER.

General Belgrano goes to Paraguay—His Despatches—Decree in favour of the Indians of Paraguay—Elio appointed Viceroy—Belgrano's Defeat—General Velasco, Governor of Paraguay—The Junta of Paraguay—Expedition from Paraguay to Corrientes—War in the Banda Oriental—Buenos Ayres Congress—The Portuguese—The Prince Regent of Brazil—Captain Elliot, of the sloop-of-war Mutine—A new Junta in Buenos Ayres—Belgrano, Rondeau, and Artigas, on the Banda Oriental—Elio shut up.

London, 1842.

AMONG the events which characterized the stirring commencement of the second year of the River Plate revolution, was the equipment by Buenos Ayres of a small force destined, as already mentioned, under the command of General Belgrano, not for the *conquest* of the Paraguayans, but for their liberation from the Spanish yoke. Belgrano's force consisted of 800 men; and in order to convey an idea of the grandiloquent style in which his first operations were communicated, and commemorated

by the incipient republic, we shall give a translation from the gazette extraordinary issued on this occasion.

It is dated the 2nd of January, 1811; and the exploits performed by the invading general consisted, without the loss of a man, in his killing two of the enemy, taking a two-pounder, a brace of howitzers, a flag, a few muskets, and a canoe, beside crossing the river Paraná, and removing his head-quarters from Candelaria to Itapúa. With the following eulogium the government introduces to the notice of the people the general's despatches detailing these events:—

“ We hasten,” says the Junta, “ to satisfy public curiosity in regard to the highly-important achievements of our expedition to the north.

“ They are so much the more worthy of our applause, that they present to our contemplation an enterprise in which, before a victory could be gained over men, it was necessary to obtain one over nature.

“ Those who know the frightful difficulties of this march will not hesitate to pronounce that our troops are endowed with that strength of frame, and fired

with that enthusiasm of spirit, which the heroic ages admired in a Hercules and a Theseus. These are rare virtues in a day and generation when the human species has so greatly degenerated in consequence of excessive indulgence in effeminate pleasures. In proportion to the proximity of danger, our troops have assumed a fresh degree of energy. Socrates boasted that he had a good genius always at hand to lend him assistance. Shall we for a moment doubt that the brave general of the expedition had also *his* good genius, who guides him along the path prepared for him by his high destiny?

“ His measures and harangues, at least, have given rise to prodigies of valour, which fall nothing short of the most glorious achievements of our forefathers. The victory gained over those who guarded the pass of the Paraná, raising high the reputation of our arms over those of the enemy, stamp them with a superiority which, as in the case of Suipacha, we may hail as the infallible presage of the humiliating overthrow of our rivals.” Here follows a document styled “ Proclamation of the General to the Army of Operations in the North,”

inculcating, in strong and praiseworthy terms, the necessity of subordination, order, and friendly treatment of the Paraguayans, the subjects, like themselves, of the unfortunate Ferdinand VII.

While the general marched onwards from Itapúa towards Assumption, for the liberation of Paraguay, the government of Buenos Ayres, anxious to conciliate and draw into their service the aborigines of the country, issued a decree for the admission of the Indians to seats in congress, with the same privileges as those enjoyed by the other members of it. The measure was one decreed for mere effect; it was altogether premature; and it was so impossible practically to carry it out, that although thirty years have elapsed since this high-sounding distinction was accorded to the aborigines, there has not, as far as we know, in all that time, been an instance of the transformation of a single Indian into a legislator. We must except here a few of the Indians in Peru, who have been educated at Cusco, and have occasionally had seats in the legislature, or been honoured with a cassock and a cowl; but of the great mass of natives, we may safely say that they are poor, ignorant, trampled on, and degraded men.

It will take a century yet to encourage them to stand upright in the presence of their taskmasters.

An event now happened which called forth all the energy of the Junta, and rendered more palpable than before the great gulph which the revolution had interposed between it and Spain. General Elio, a man odious to the Buenos Ayreans, came out to Monte Video, invested by the regency with the title of Viceroy and Captain-general of the Provinces of the River Plate, and claimed, first in a conciliatory, but soon in a more decided tone, the Junta's submission to him. Spain, ever behind-hand with her remedial measures, might as well, at that time of day, have sent a viceroy to claim jurisdiction over one of the planets. Elio's proposals were indignantly rejected both by the Junta and municipal body. It was in vain that he declared them traitors; they set him at open defiance; and active preparations for war were commenced on both sides.

Meantime Belgrano, not having made it sufficiently clear to the Paraguayans that he had entered their territory in the capacity of a real friend, was received by them as a decided foe. He was worsted at Yugueri, and routed at Taquari; but he

had fortunately no more than eleven men killed and twelve wounded ; he was then civilly escorted out of Paraguay by his opponent, General Caváñas, and staff ; and whenever the victor saw his defeated enemy in his old head-quarters of Candelaria, fairly out of the province of Paraguay, and the wide Paraná interposed between them, a quite friendly intercourse commenced. It is true that the Spanish general Velasco (entirely opposed to the Buenos Ayres chief) still retained the government of the provinces in his own hands ; but the invasion of Belgrano, who dexterously gained by his diplomacy what he could not effect by his arms, opened the eyes of the Paraguayos to their own dependent position, and determined them no longer to remain in it.

They were induced, if not precipitated to the adoption of a plan for the overthrow of the authority of the mother-country, by Velasco's unwise measure, not only of inviting the Portuguese troops to his assistance, from San Borja, but of making an underhand cession of the province to the Infanta Carlota, as regent and heiress presumptive of Ferdinand VII. Poor Velasco, vacillating between his fears of a second invasion by Buenos Ayres on

the one hand and his ill-concealed distrust of the Paraguay troops and people on the other, in attempting to save his fortunes from shipwreck on the Scylla of foreign aid, had them wrecked on the Charybdis of domestic strife.

Cabañas, the hero, as he was called, of Taquari, reinforced by Don Fulgencio Yegros, revolutionized with their little successful army, the whole province ; while Don Pedro Juan Cavallero, a captain of the city guards, surprised Velasco's quartèl, took himself, the Cabildo, and Portuguese emissaries prisoners ; and had the concurrence in this rather strong measure, of all the good patriots of Assumption. Velasco, it will be remembered, was a native of Spain, and governor, under the old regime, of the province. This revolution took place without the bloodshed of a single individual. Shortly afterwards a junta was formed, consisting of the two successful chiefs, Yegros and Cavallero ; and to them were added Doctor Francia and two secretaries.* Of these events the government of Buenos

* The members of the *first* junta in Assumption were Cabañas, Cavallero, and Gamarra, with Father Cavallero and Francia as secretaries. But the intrigues of the latter, in combination with Yegros, who had retained the command of the army, soon led to the ousting of Cabañas and Gamarra, and to the substitution, in their

Ayres was politely informed; and Belgrano and Doctor Echeverria not in this case bent on exploits of arms, were deputed by the Junta of the River Plate, as envoys to that of Paraguay. With every demonstration of mutual sincerity and goodwill, a treaty of peace, confederation, and commerce was celebrated between the two infant republics; but Paraguay provided distinctly for her independence of Buenos Ayres, and the latter was content to receive as an ally on these terms the country she had been unable, by force of arms, to reduce to the rank of a subordinate province.

The special mission of the Argentine deputies being thus concluded, they withdrew; and Francia began, from this time, to consider the province as his own. The only difficulty with which he had to contend was that of subjecting his hot, impatient temper to the calculations of his more sober reason, as he measured the slow, but sure steps by which he was gradually to ascend to the envied height of unlimited power. The calculating, crafty, and systematic plans of Francia, must be considered as an exception to those generally pursued by the places, of the wily doctor as secretary and of the Gaucho Yegros as president.

South American leaders for their personal advancement.

The creatures of chance, and the despots of a day, many of them have been raised to power, and deprived of it, without either foresight or calculation of their own: and it has in some cases happened, that gross defects and malversation have for too long a time upheld men in office, when straightforward and honourable conduct would have driven them from it.

The great bane of the South American republics has been the want of moral integrity and rectitude in many of their leading public men.

It deserves to be mentioned here, to the credit of Paraguay, that having sent an expedition, under the command of Roxas, to Corrientes, while it yet acknowledged the rule of Spain, he took the city, made prisoners of all the European Spaniards, and took thirteen of their vessels that were there. They were transmitted to Buenos Ayres, to be disposed of by the Junta; the territory of Corrientes was delivered also to that body; and Roxas, having performed this timely service, returned with his troops to Paraguay, leaving the Correntinos at liberty to govern themselves. They forthwith

incorporated their province with the republic of Buenos Ayres, and soon after sent two deputies to the congress there.

So entirely had Buenos Ayres assumed that the interior provinces, while they managed their own local affairs, were to be subject, in all matters of general interest and concernment, to the congress or assembly which was to hold its sessions in the capital, that regulations, embracing twenty-four articles, and dictated as of right, were circulated to the different inland towns, for due and punctual observance, by the authorities to be there constituted. This, together with the unscrupulous conduct in their respective commands of many of the Buenos Ayres chiefs, gave rise to that hollow murmur, against what was called the usurped authority of one of the states over the rest. Reverberating through them all, this murmur has found a vent in revolutionary eruptions, of which the crater, when overcharged, as it too often is, with combustible matter, continues to send forth the lava of "domestic fury and fierce civil strife."*

The attention of Buenos Ayres was now almost exclusively divided between the war with Peru, and that in the Banda Oriental. The latter, however,

* See Appendix.

as being the more immediate and urgent, claimed a primary attention. Stringent acts of non-intercourse were promulgated; Chile was invited to co-operate, and agreed to do so; a spirited proclamation was issued to the inhabitants of the Banda Oriental, calling upon them to shake off their odious chains: at the head of three hundred men, Ramon Fernandez, comandante of the district, took the town of Mercedes, and secured all the old Spaniards; Artigas, at Nogoyà, in the province of Santa Fé, hastened to co-operate with Fernandez; Don Bartolome Zapata raised a company of fifty-two men, at his own expense, and took in succession the towns of Gualeguay, Gualeguaychù, and Arroyo de la China; Soler, in conjunction with Benavides, defeated the Marinos, under Michilena, at Santo Domingo Soriano. The whole country, in short, was in commotion; and Elio, considering that many small affairs make at last a great one, issued a proclamation, warning his rebellious subjects, instantly to lay down their arms. He threatened, if they did not, to let loose upon them an army of four thousand Portuguese troops, which was, he said, at his nod, on the frontiers of Brazil. This latter threat, though undoubtedly authorized by the

Court of Brazil, was strangely at variance with a letter received precisely at the same time by the Junta from the Conde de Linares, in which he assured them of the high regard of his master, the Prince Regent of Brazil, and of his desire to cultivate their friendship and alliance. To this letter the Junta returned a reply, full of similar professions.

Elio now issued a decree declaring lawful prizes all vessels (not even excepting the English) which should attempt to enter the port of Buenos Ayres, or be found there after the 15th of March, 1811. He found at his hand, and at his nod, a naval officer, ready to uphold (Oh, tell it not in Gath, proclaim it not in Askelon !) with English artillery, and under the British flag, this unjustifiable decree. Captain Elliot, who was still in the Plate in his fine sloop of war, the Mutine, performed the work of Elio, warning vessels off the port and out of it ; and when a respectful remonstrance was sent off to him by the British merchants, he ordered the bearer of it, Mr. David Stevenson, to be shown over the side, threatening at the same time, should such another deputy again dare to set foot on board His Britannic Majesty's ship, that the boatswain's cane

would be applied to his back. What a contrast to little Lieutenant Ramsay (already mentioned) of the little schooner Mistletoe!

While the war in the Banda Oriental was assuming every day a more favourable aspect, and Casteli's campaign in Peru was attended with good success, a popular commotion took place in Buenos Ayres; and the unwieldy Junta, of about twenty members, jarring in principle, desultory in debate, tardy in council, wavering in action, and more employed in seeking personal partizans than in the promotion of the public weal, was superseded by a junta of three, namely, Chiclana, Gutierrez, and Alagon, with the addition of Doctor Campana as their secretary.

A revolution of a less justifiable kind threatened at this same time to desolate the capital of Chile with blood; but the author of it, Tomás de Fígueron, who, for his reckless enterprize, had seduced two battalions of the troops, was taken, tried at twelve o'clock at night, sentenced half an hour afterwards; and at four in the morning was seen hanging on a gibbet in the great square. Such checks as these to the successful unity and continuity of general operations against the common

enemy were of frequent occurrence ; and if they did not wholly paralyze military affairs, they beyond all doubt entangled them, and retarded final success.

To return, for an instant, to General Belgrano. Having congregated at Mercedes the remains of his army defeated in Paraguay, and augmented it by some partial enlistments and succours, particularly at San José, the command of it was made over to General Rondeau, who, named by the government commander-in-chief of the army of the Banda Oriental, infused by the aid of different military chiefs, especially of his second in command, José Artigas, great spirit into his troops. Rondeau took over with him from Buenos Ayres a reinforcement of from two to three thousand men, a considerable sum of money, and other military requisites. Artigas had eighteen hundred men under him, being then encamped near the River Santa Lucia, not far from Monte Video. San José had fallen, and Maldonado been taken by Manuel Artigas, the brother of the general. Colonia was threatened ; and a concentration of the troops was ordered at the head-quarters of Mercedes, thence to march, and establish the siege of Monte Video. Elio made underhand and de-

grading offers of compromise to Artigas, which were indignantly rejected by him. He shortly afterwards, over greatly superior numbers of the Montevidean army, gained the celebrated victory of Las Piedras. This victory delivered the whole Banda Oriental, except the fortress of Monte Video itself, into the hands of the patriots; for at almost the same moment Benavides took Colonia. Foiled in his formal proposals for an armistice, both by the Junta and by the army, the thwarted but energetic viceroy was obliged to shut himself up within his fortress. There, while closely confined within his walls, he made his preparations for warlike aggression. His position was alike disheartening to the soldier, and humiliating to the viceroy, seeing that his appointment as such gave him delegated dominion over one-fourth of South America. But now his last and only strong hold was about to be attacked; for after a spirited proclamation to the troops, from head-quarters at Miguelete (distant from the fortress about three miles), Rondeau laid formal siege to Monte Video.

Your's, &c.

THE AUTHORS.

LETTER XXXII.

THE AUTHORS to GENERAL MILLER.

Reinforcement from Chile—The British Consul, Robert Ponsonby Staples, Esquire—Casteli's operations in Peru—Abascal and Goyoneche—Casteli and Goyoneche—Belgrano and Goyoneche—Affair of Yuracoragua—Casteli's Defeat—Revolts in Oruro, and dispersion of the Army—Pueyrredon's Retreat admirably conducted—His Difficulties—The Account—His Retreat, continued—And concluded.

London, 1842.

As a reinforcement to Buenos Ayres, and as a proof of the cordiality of Chile, a small auxiliary legion crossed the Andes, and marching over the Pampas, entered the city covered with dust, and overcome with fatigue; but amid merry peals of bells, firing of cannon, and the most kind and hospitable reception from the natives. In mitigation of one of the hardships of war, an exchange of prisoners was effected between Elio and Rondeau. The former having endeavoured to implicate the gallant Captain Heywood, of the *Nereus* frigate, as a partisan, aiding and abetting the cause of the

patriots, or feigning to do so, the British officer indignantly repelled the charge. While he maintained on the station the strictest neutrality, he yet showed Elio that neither British interests nor British principles were to be attacked by him with impunity. The viceroy had now no Elliot to deal with. Admiral De Courcy had insisted, on the ground of our alliance with Spain, and pending negociations for the pacification of the colonies, that our commerce, ships, and subjects should be unmolested ; and Elio, first by Ramsay in his invisible schooner, and next by Heywood in his stout frigate, was, ere long, taught that a British admiral's orders were not given to be disobeyed.

In order to separate a little between the naval and diplomatic duties of the station, Mr. Staples, after having for some time been tolerated, but not recognized by our government as English consul at Buenos Ayres, was now formally gazetted in that capacity. *De facto*, however, a British frigate always carried with the new governments greater weight than consular interference ; and the merchants, confiding more in our floating batteries than in our diplomatic appointments, grudged the supplies necessary to support the latter.

Taking now a glance at the operations in Peru, we find that the High Commissioner Casteli, invested with powers which he calls "unlimited," had pushed on as far as La Paz. He had under him, as commander-in-chief of the Buenos Ayres forces, Brigadier-General Don Ramon Balcarce. The obstacles to his advance to this northernmost boundary of Upper Peru, had been removed by the generals who preceded him, and by the rising of other provinces, as well as that of Cochabamba. These events facilitated the supplies required for his army, and the enlistment of recruits, by which it was strengthened and augmented.

Abascal was at this time (1811) viceroy of Lima; and Goyeneche, (a staunch royalist, although a native of Arequipa,) was in command of the forces opposed to the army of Balcarce, called "the Auxiliary Army of Peru." There were about four thousand men on each side; the headquarters of Goyeneche were at the Desaguadero,—those of Balcarce, which were at La Paz on the 17th of April, were moved forward to Laja on the 13th of May.

The former, either meditating a general move-

ment toward the enemy or feigning one, pushed a detachment to within a quarter of a league of Huaquì, where Balcarce had an advance post,—his vanguard being at Laja. A slight affair took place, in which Goyeneche's party after being worsted, retreated about a league to the northward of Huaquì, and finally fell back upon the main force at the Desaguadero.

Neither the one nor the other chief, however, was prepared, if even inclined, to come, at this time, to a general engagement. Under the pretext, therefore, on Goyeneche's part, of allowing time for an amicable adjustment of differences, and on Casteli's of avoiding the unnecessary effusion of blood, an armistice of forty days was proposed by the former, and unfortunately agreed to by the latter chief. The rencontre at Huaquì took place on the 11th of April; the armistice was signed by Goyeneche at the Desaguadero on the 14th of May, and it was ratified by Casteli, at Laja, on the 16th of the same month. Goyeneche, no doubt, required such a truce; for he had troops both to concentrate and to discipline; but the forces of Balcarce were, or ought to have been, ready for action there and then. The advantage obtained at

Huaqùi, slight as it was, if followed up, would have enabled them to take Goyeneche by surprise, at least, inadequately prepared for a general attack; but so far was Casteli from making it, that he not only granted the armistice of forty days, but when, six days before its termination, Balcarce was attacked by his cunning and more subtle antagonist, the Buenos Ayres general was taken completely unawares. The fact is, that aware the armistice was to be broken by Goyeneche, the High Commissioner Casteli, at a council of war with the officers of his force, had determined to attack the enemy at his head-quarters of the Desaguadero; but counting without military skill on the attack which they had planned to come off there, it failed through Goyeneche's marching with his whole force, on the morning of the 20th of June, in the direction of the Quebrada of Yuraicoragua, which forms a line of communication between the plain of Machaca and river of the Desaguadero, at one end, and that of Huaqùi and Laguna at the other.

Balcarce's force, hurriedly marshalled, was drawn up in three divisions, of which Viamont commanded the right, Diaz Velez the left, and Balcarce, in person, that of the centre. But before this latter

division came up and could be fully formed, Viamont and Diaz Velez, being in advance, were both beaten, and falling back in disorder. Seeing this, the men of the third division took the alarm, and without firing a shot, either threw down their arms, or, deserting to the enemy, used them against their own comrades.

At this critical moment, General Rivero, who, with a considerable body of cavalry and infantry had been ordered to cross the new bridge of the Desaguadero, and attack the enemy in his rear, left his unavailing, but prescribed, position, struck across the country to the scene of action, and arrived just in time to arrest the headlong flight of Balcarce's army ; to give it more the character of a retreat, and to *protect* that retreat. Rivero, a general of Cochabamba, seems to have been the only man left in his senses on this occasion ; and to him alone, in consequence of disobeying Casteli's orders, which were that he should on no account leave his post, even should he hear that Balcarce was beaten, did the Buenos Ayres army owe its ignoble escape from annihilation.

This action, called sometimes that of Huaqùi, and sometimes that of Yuraicoragua, but best

known as that of the Desaguadero, dispersed, as Casteli himself confesses, the remains of his army throughout La Paz, Potosi, and Despoblado; and yet, strange to say, he informs the Junta that the enemy's loss had been three times the amount of his own. He thus, on the 28th of June, that is eight days after the fray, concludes his despatch:—

“ This misfortune, though it has weakened our force, has increased our enthusiasm; and it will render to us more sure and certain the ultimate success which we anticipate over our atrocious, deceitful, and treacherous enemy.”

The news, notwithstanding, spread great consternation over the minds of thinking people, and even the Junta, after many palliations and subterfuges, was constrained, at last, to confess that the affair of the Desaguadero had been a “ derrota,”—a route;—“ descalabro,”—a headlong dispersion: while Pueyrredon subsequently calls it “ an incredible dissolution.”

In consequence of it Goyeneche, advancing to Oruro, threatened Cochabamba; while Pueyrredon, in order to collect stragglers, and carry off what money he could, placing the whole beyond reach of

the enemy, retired to Potosi, and made immediate preparations for a retreat to the southward. This retreat is marked by so many circumstances illustrative, though on a small scale, of South American warfare; it has so much of the air of the retreat of the Ten Thousand about it, that we are tempted to give a detailed account of part of it, as well in the way of illustration as for its own intrinsic merit.

Writing to the Junta of Buenos Ayres from his head-quarters of Campo Santo, on the 4th of October, 1811, the intrepid colonel informs it that "scarcely had the flight, or rather the incredible dissolution of the army in Huaqùi become known, before the most baneful influence of our enemies in the interior began to make rapid and fearful progress on the minds of the Peruvian people; and that liberty which had cost so many sacrifices to achieve for them, became a matter in which some took little interest, and which others viewed with abhorrence, from the moment they perceived that it could be defended only at the point of the bayonet.

"Thus, in an instant, the whole town of Oruro turned against the patriots, and subsequently the inhabitants of many others, who had heretofore

sought nothing so much as the bitter persecution of our soldiers, whenever an occasion presented itself of sacrificing them."

He justly excepts the city of Chuquisaca ; for, according to all the accounts conveyed to him after he quitted that place, it appears to have been the only one which had continued to behave well.

" Under these circumstances," he continues, " it was my first care to watch over the town of Potosi ; and as I knew it contained the greatest number of our worst enemies, I felt it doubly necessary to train systematically the troops I had raised since the former insurrection, seeing many of them did nothing but consume the money of the state. Besides, it was not only a military position, but contained the public treasure, out of which I was to provide for the support of my army."

The Junta of Charcas agreed with him as to the propriety of this step. He marched, therefore, for Potosi immediately on the arrival there of the former representative of the Junta, his Excellency Dr. Don Juan José Casteli.

No sooner had Pueyrredon assumed the command of that province than he found himself surrounded on all hands by interminable difficulties.

His efforts to overcome them proved abortive: he had neither the necessary time to effect this, nor were circumstances favourable for his doing so. These difficulties, under different aspects, continued to press upon him, till an outbreak on the 5th and 6th against the shattered remains of his army convinced him how unavailing had been his efforts to conciliate. Of nine hundred men, on full and regular pay in the town, there were found none, except a few of his confidential officers, who would serve him in his extremity. The rest prowled about the streets, aiding and abetting the rebellion, or they shut themselves up in their houses from pure fear.

The enemy was advancing, and Pueyrredon's political situation in Peru was getting worse every day. There was no further hope of safety or assistance but in the efforts to be made by Cochabamba; but as he knew that even these might be frustrated by adverse events, he calculated on them with prudential distrust.

There was now, therefore, he says, no alternative left but to retreat, with a few troops, in order that he might save the treasure, artillery, ammunition, arms, and any other valuable pro-

erty of the state. For this purpose he asked the provisional junta to provide him on the instant with four hundred sumpter and saddle mules. It gave its orders accordingly, but sent a commissary to procure them at Chicas, a measure calculated inevitably to retard his operations. The enemy was advancing upon Cochabamba ; and the positions which he occupied had shown Pueyrredon that his destruction would have been inevitable, if, when the news reached him of the enemy's having taken Cochabamba, he had still been in occupation of Potosi. He had therefore resolved, before it should come to this, to move his head-quarters to Puna. The troops, he knew, would there be under better discipline, and free from the influence of seduction ; while he might there also deposit the treasure and other articles of war in a place of safety. He could not, however, realize these intentions ; for the provisional government and Cabildo, having strong reliance on the adherence to them of the inhabitants, openly opposed him.

It was in vain that Pueyrredon unceasingly besought them to furnish the required supplies. The critical moment approached ; and yet everything remained in *statu quo*. This state of apathy drove

him almost to despair; and, resolved no longer to submit to it from any false consideration of delicacy, he went to the junta on the 20th of August, and laid before it an exposé of the imminent peril in which he was placed, peremptorily told the members of it, that if in three days everything he wanted for his march were not furnished, all would be lost, and they should be forced to go with him, to submit the defence of their conduct to the supreme government at Buenos Ayres.

On the instant, they proposed to place everything at his disposal; and he forthwith made them draw up, in his own presence, the necessary orders. He then desired to have three commissioners of known probity appointed, in order that they might take charge of the treasure. These were Don José Mariano Toro, and Don José Truxillo, who accepted the office; and Don Ignacio de la Torre, who pleaded the excuse of ill health. Another being named in his stead, they began, working day and night, to receive and pack in skins the money of the state.

During those days, he laid an embargo on all the mules and muleteers that entered the town; so

that on the evening of the 24th he had nearly ninety sumpter mules in readiness.

Pueyrredon knew nothing of the state of Cochabamba, and the accounts from it having thus suddenly ceased, he drew from them the most fatal inferences.

About four o'clock in the afternoon of the 24th, Captain Don Mariano Nogales brought him some despatches taken from a courier intercepted on his way to Oruro by the Potosi detachment of six hundred men, which had been sent by Pueyrredon to cut off the communication and prevent the introduction of supplies to the enemy. He was now informed that all these troops, upon hearing of the defeat of the Cochabambinos, had made a sudden movement upon his flank, and would enter Puna the following day.

He only saw in this a new impediment to his retreat, for he knew those were men identified with the inhabitants of the town, and by no means the least formidable part of them.

He gave strict orders to Nogales to keep the most vigilant watch over the movements of Cochabamba, and despatched immediately an order to

Yocalla, addressed to the chiefs of the Potosi detachment, to remain at that point till further orders.

The populace of Puna, perceiving his unfortunate predicament, began with fury to arm itself against him, although he had issued a military bando (proclamation) awarding the penalty of death to any one who, by word or deed, should throw the remotest obstacle in the way of his operations.

The perils by which he was environed were of the most imminent kind; nor could his confidence in his position be very great, when he could only rely for support upon the grenadiers of La Plata.

But considering that the treasure, if captured from him, would augment the power and increase the influence of the enemy, in the same ratio that such a catastrophe would cripple every movement of his own, he came to the determination either to save it, or perish in the attempt. He resolved, therefore, to commence his march on the 26th, having occupied all the 25th either in buying, or taking by compulsion from the inhabitants, the mules required to complete his equipment.

But at half-past seven on the evening of that day, the captain of grenadiers of La Plata came in upon him, with great precipitation, to tell him that his

whole company had deserted him, after throwing down their arms in the barracks.

This blow, he says, would certainly have proved fatal to his firmness, had he not been supported by the love of his country. His ruin would have been inevitable, if, at daybreak of the following day, the inhabitants had found him disarmed, and deserted by his grenadiers, who, from their discipline, had alone kept the people within bounds, and at a respectful distance.

It is true that he had two companies of Cinti, but they had just arrived from their own country, clad in their own costume, unarmed, undrilled,—useless, in short. He, therefore, made all his arrangements for taking his departure that very night, without disclosing his plan to any one, except to those possessed of his entire confidence. He armed and dressed the Cinteños in the clothing and caps of the grenadiers who had deserted, and ordered them to be ready to march at two o'clock in the morning, without a man's being allowed, on any pretext, to leave the barracks after the calling over of the second muster-roll.

His orders were punctually obeyed through the singular zeal and promptitude of the two captains,

Don Juan Francisco Rivera and Don Pedro Romero, aided by the scrupulous obedience of their subaltern officers. He united a few soldiers of the army, whom he had kept in concealment, owing to the persevering determination of the provisional junta to force them out of the town, for which purpose repeated official notices were sent to him.

With a force of not more than forty-five men of all arms, he resolved to direct his march to the southward.

At twelve o'clock at night he ordered the mules to be taken to the mint, with a command to the commissaries to commence the loading of them, which was successfully effected by four o'clock of the morning of the 25th. Having now completed his measures, he ordered the lieutenant of artillery, Don Juan Pedro Lima, to spike all the guns, a task which was speedily executed by this gallant officer.

Up to this time the rabble of the town were carelessly asleep, or perhaps they were preparing in secrecy the means of Pueyrredon's destruction. It was about half-past four in the morning when he marched out of the town, commanding the most rigid silence to be preserved by his little band of troops, and taking the bells from the mules in order

that the noise of them might not awaken those whom he was now forced to look upon as his decided enemies.

Notwithstanding these precautions, three mule loads of silver disappeared.

Having occupied the avenues which led to the square, and having there assembled his now laden mules, he gave the order to march, dividing his small force between the van and the rear of the convoy. He thus traversed the streets, inhabited by a dense population, without further noise than that caused by the treading of the animals. When the light of day of the 25th came to show him the state of his caravan, he perceived it was beyond the danger of the pass of the Socabon, and he began to breathe on finding himself in the open country, escaped from the dangers which every street, and almost every house, had so lately presented to him.

The populace, however, awoke at length, and finding he had decamped,—seeing their preparations for his annihilation frustrated,—they rushed to all the belfries of the town, and ringing to arms, went in perfect fury to the government-house, in order to take possession of the artillery there. With this they pursued at a precipitate pace, certain that

with it they would be able utterly to destroy Pueyrredon.

No sooner had they reached, however, the pass of the Socabon, and begun to load and prime the guns, than their desperation, on finding them spiked and useless, exceeded all bounds. This precaution on his part their precipitation made them overlook, at least so he was informed by several inhabitants of the town who left it some hours afterwards.

Not checked, however, by this incident, they united themselves with the Indians of the mountains, who had been summoned for this purpose, and came, at double-quick time, to the attack.

The noise of the bells had prepared him for this movement of the populace, and he, therefore, drew up his little force in the rear of his caravan, without discontinuing his march. A few minutes only elapsed when he saw an immense multitude advancing in pursuit of him.

“This was no time,” says Pueyrredon, “for reflection, but for defending with bullets what I had at so much risk, and after so much fatigue, been able so far to save.” He sent forward, therefore, the sumpter-mules under charge of the commissioners

and an escort of sixteen Cinteños, with orders to proceed at a rapid rate on their journey; while he faced about to await the attack of the mixed multitude which he had just discovered in his rear.

He chose a position on a slight eminence which flanked the high road, drew up in line the Cinteños transformed into grenadiers, and, dividing into small guerrillas the force of forty-five effective men, advanced upon the people, certainly not under two thousand men, armed with sticks, lances, slings, and some muskets. For some time they resisted the attack, but, terror-stricken, no doubt, by observing the reserve, which he had left formed upon the height, they fled to the mountains for safety, leaving several dead upon the field. The march was continued; but a second and a third time was the party similarly attacked, and, in like manner as before, beaten off. "Those masses of Peruvian vagabonds," says the colonel, "have a facility equal to that of their own *gamas*, of dispersing among the mountains, and of reuniting the moment they observe the backs of their enemies turned to them." Thus he proceeded, during the whole day, amid reiterated skirmishes, till the shades of night dispersed the groups of his adversaries in the vici-

nity of Laba. He arrived there without any other loss than of an officer killed, and a boy dangerously wounded. It was about nine o'clock when he reached the place, exposed to a rain as heavy as it was extraordinary at that season, but which was not without its consolation, as he anticipated that it would lend its aid to the total dispersion of the enemy, who still lurked about the neighbouring mountains.

It were difficult to describe the mortification he experienced when, on making this his first halt for the day, after a march of twenty-seven miles on foot, annoyed and embarrassed by the unceasing attacks of the enemy, drenched and exhausted, he found himself with scanty means of ministering to the wants of his men; for the Great House of Laba, as well as the cottages around it, had all been abandoned by their owners; so that the party was obliged, with short rations, to lie down for the night without even a fire to dry and warm them in that frigid climate. Pueyrredon was there joined by 150 Tarijeños (natives of Tarija), whom the junta of that town was sending to Potosi, but without arms.

In consequence of the difficulty of finding provi-

sions for these men, as well as for those already with him, he caused a sum of money to be paid to each of them, in order to remunerate them, in some sense, for the services they had performed, for the fatigues they had undergone, and to encourage them to persevere.

He prosecuted his march to Calsa, where he arrived at nightfall of the 26th, and there, at length, he was enabled to procure nourishment for his soldiers. Thus refreshed, he continued his march by the road of Cinti, with the object of getting, as fast as possible, out of the territory, and rid of the baneful influence exercised by that capital.

Colonel Pueyrredon's account of his retreat extends considerably beyond the extract from it which we have given; but we have been content to follow him through this portion of it, because the history of his two days' march is sufficiently illustrative of that of the days which followed, till he reached Tarija, and this, he says, was "the first point of territory where he felt that he was upon friendly ground."

In the several rencontres which he had, some of them rather formidable; in the many privations which he suffered, still more formidable; in the

patience with which they were endured; in his generous and always feeling conduct to his companions in arms; and in the watchful eye which he kept upon the hide bags of dollars, until he successfully brought them out of the enemy's clutches,—he showed himself at once a brave soldier and a good citizen; and well convinced that money is not the sinew only, but the very heart's core of war, we question whether his little faithful troop would have shown so much fidelity, or supported their leader with such praiseworthy tenacity, if they had seen the laden mules driven off to the right hand or the left by a party of the enemy. Such were the results, for the time being, of the battle of the Desaguadero.

Your's, &c.,

THE AUTHORS.

LETTER XXXIII.

THE AUTHORS to GENERAL MILLER.

Buenos Ayres bombarded—An Englishman afraid—Michelena, commander of the blockading Vessels, and the Washerwoman—Siege of Monte Video—The Junta of Three—Treaty of Pacification with Monte Video—Military Revolt—Government's account of it—The guilty parties executed.

London, 1842.

WHILE these things were passing in Peru, all was stir and bustle in Buenos Ayres. The famous "Marinos," with five small vessels and two gun-boats, under the command of Michelena, came up from Monte Video, which Rondeau was bombarding. Taking their station at nine o'clock, P.M., in the inner roads, the flotilla, or Esquadra Sutil, commenced, without previous intimation, bombarding Buenos Ayres. The heated shells came describing their beautiful arcs over the city, already lit up by the lamp of night. The families were mostly at their tertulias; and though here one shell was bursting, and there another, the ladies could not be restrained from going to the tops of

the houses to witness the sight. Those who have seen shells coming in magnificent curve through the air, know that the destructive messenger, though he may fall a quarter of a mile from the spot whence he is seen, seems always as if he would fall on the spot itself where the observer stands. So it was that night.

Mr. J. P. R. happened to be on the azotea of Madame O'Gorman ; and he was one member only of a large tertulia, congregated to witness the scene. The Porteñas shrank a little as the shells approached ; and feigned to scream as they fell. One person only, and he an Englishman, was afraid. Convinced that he was to be the victim of a descending grenade, he made a run off the azotea into the patio ; and by his fall, broken fortunately by an open door, he narrowly escaped the penalty of a broken limb, which the shell, falling two whole quadras from where he was, never came charged to inflict.

After throwing some fifty shells into the town, and keeping up a brisk, but ineffective fire upon the beach, Michelena sent a summons to the authorities to surrender. He little thought that while he was firing, the Porteñas were singing, dancing, or

calmly looking on ; and as little did he expect to receive for answer that he might do his worst. When he had done so, in the way described, he sailed. Shortly afterwards, he renewed his attack, and the negro washerwomen on the beach hooted him, clapped their mouths with their hands, and broke forth into every sort of extravagant and ridiculous gesticulation. Thus he went off the second time, and never returned on a similar errand.

Meanwhile the siege of Monte Video proceeded, the island of Ratas was taken by Rondeau, and the enemy worsted in all his sorties.

Some jealousy, at this time, arose between that general and Artigas ; but their differences were adjusted ; and at the suggestion of a classical friend of both, open profession was made of restored unanimity. He reminded them how fatal to the Grecian army were the cabals of its two principal chiefs, in front of the walls of hated Troy ; and pointing to Monte Video, said, “ If there it were known that disputes are going on here,—

”*Η κεν γηθήσαι Πρίαμος Πρίαμοι τε 'Παῖδες.*

Another change of government took place at

Buenos Ayres, the particulars of which it is unnecessary to state further than to say that the executive power was committed to Doctor Don Feliciano de Chiclana, Don Manuel de Sarratèa, and Doctor Don Juan José de Paso, as a junta, of which each member had a vote. Doctor Don Bernardino Rivadavia, and Doctor Don Vicente Lopez, were added as secretaries, without votes.

This junta issued the usual proclamation, setting forth the great necessity for reform, unity, and celerity of action ; it recalled the deputies of the original junta, who had been banished ; it raised a regiment of blacks and mulattos (cleped Patricios) and elevated it to the rank of a veteran corps ; the soldiers of the Banda Oriental were declared “*Benemeritos de la Patria, en grado heroico* ;” the Bishop of Cordova was liberated, and appointed to officiate as the diocesan of Buenos Ayres ; the birthday of poor Ferdinand the Seventh was celebrated with great pomp,—the restored deputies, however, refusing to have their seats of honour regulated by the Government ; the basis of a treaty of pacification with Monte Video was substantially laid, and the treaty itself ratified by Elio, on the 21st of October, 1811 ; the siege was forthwith

raised ; Pueyrredon was appointed to the command in chief of the army of Peru, where things began once more to wear a favourable aspect, in consequence of the re-taking of Cochabamba by Don Estevan Arcè ; the Indians were declared exempt from tribute ; duties on foreign merchandize were lowered one-third ; Don Nicholas de Herrera was appointed Secretary of Government and Foreign Affairs ; and all these things, some of them fortunate, and most of them good, were brought about under the new government, in the short period of three months, verifying the old proverb, that “new brooms sweep clean.”

In the midst, however, of the more or less gratifying events just recorded, one of a tragic, and at first seriously alarming, character occurred, as threatening to involve the country in the horrors of lawless anarchy and military insubordination.

The first regiment of foot, instigated by two or three discontented serjeants, shut themselves up, unknown to their officers, in one of the barracks of the town. They there fortified themselves ; placed cannon at the mouths of two of the streets by which it was approached ; stationed armed parties on the azoteas ; and took other measures indicative

at once of their violent councils and reckless resolution to persist in their meritorious conduct unto death.

Mr. J. P. R. was at his window, when a column of the Government troops, just under it, advanced upon two guns of the rebels, at a quadra's distance.* Two artillery-men applied their lighted matches to the pieces of ordnance, heavily charged with grape and chain shot. Down at the spectator's feet fell many wounded, and several killed; among the former the brave Captain Amaya, who was conveyed into the observer's house, and had his leg amputated that day by an English surgeon.

Many more wounded followed Captain Amaya; the guns were taken by the advancing column; the whole city resounded with the loud and long cannonading; till, driven back to their barracks, the insurgents, after great loss, were forced to surrender at discretion.

The focus of revolt (*i. e.*, the barracks) formed one corner of a square; at another of which stood the Casa de Temporalidades, or large building of the Jesuits, of which one part was occupied by the senior writer of these pages.

* A quadra is one hundred and fifty yards.

For the day, his house became a sort of hospital ; and some of the scenes of distress were very lamentable. Yet was it truly gratifying to observe that many of the first females of the city, drawn together by the sufferings of the wounded, ministered to them every thing which sympathy, wealth, ingenuity, and care could do in alleviation of their sufferings.

The following is a translation of one of the accounts of the matter published by the Government.

“ The SUPERIOR PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT of the United Provinces of the River Plate, acting in the name of Ferdinand the Seventh.

“ The 7th of December presented to this capital, rendered glorious by so many great events, a spectacle of the most appalling kind. At last the implacable enemies of the country found means of consummating their execrable designs by the disasters with which they had sworn to overwhelm our illustrious defenders in perdition and death. Those men, as cowardly and despicable in themselves as their projects were sanguinary and depraved, had determined, as if to augment the

ignominy of their enterprize, to make use, in their detestable scheme of ruin and degradation, of the very men who had given to the country so many days of glory. The first regiment has been seduced, and their honour taken by surprise. The vices which they acquired under an administration, careless and corrupt, have been pampered, and at length made use of to give vent to the turbulent passions of perverse and immoral men, opposed to every law which constitutes the well being of society.

“The Government has left no measure untried in order to subdue on its first breaking out this spirit of insurrection, which, on the part of the troops, led to the scandalous disobedience of their officers, and to their openly insulting of the Government. It was in vain they were called upon to consider the interests of their country, and to accept the mediation of clergymen of the highest character. Threats, condescension, and even entreaties were all unavailing; so that in order to preserve the social system, the Government was constrained to employ against the ungrateful rebels an armed force with which to oblige them to surrender at discretion, or expiate with their blood the blackest of all crimes.

The authors of the insurrection must have been filled with horror on seeing that blood flow ; but the pacific citizens, lovers of justice and of order, must have congratulated themselves on finding that a few moments sufficed to avert the incalculable evils which appeared at first connected with the tumult.

“ All necessary precautions having now been taken to avert any similar event, the Government earnestly entreats the inhabitants of the capital to be composed under its solemn guarantee, that there is not the slightest ground for apprehending the recurrence of a similar outbreak. And for further security, it is hereby ordered that all the dispersed and fugitive soldiers who have not given up their arms to the Government, through their officers, deliver them immediately, under the penalty of inevitable death in the moment of their having been found to conceal them.

“ All other persons, under the same penalty of capital punishment, are in like manner required to give instant notice not only of any arms they know or suspect to be concealed, but of whatever else may conduce to the immediate pacification of the city. In regard to the coming festival of our Lady of the Conception, it is further ordered that all the inha-

bitants do illuminate their houses to night and to morrow night, taking care to set up a greater number of lights than usual, between sunset and break of day.

(Signed) "FELICIANO ANTONIO CHICLANA.
"MANUEL DE SARRATEA.
"JUAN JOSÉ PASSO."

Of the men concerned in this insurrection, twelve were shot, and afterwards gibbeted; while a greater number were sentenced to various periods of banishment. Then came the Government's address to the troops in pretty much their usual style; and in a few days more, all was tranquillity and order.

Your's, &c.

THE AUTHORS.

LETTER XXXIV.

THE AUTHORS to GENERAL MILLER.

Intrigues of the Brazilian Court—Elio, nominal Viceroy—The Aspirations of Artigas—His Success—The Skirmish at Yapeyù—Ascuenaga—Don Pio Tristan—General San Martin and Carlos de Alvear—The General Assembly—The Contribution—Political Arrangement—Mrs. Clarke—Mission to North America—Elio and the Portuguese—General Belgrano—The Action between Tristan and Belgrano—Alzaga's Conspiracy and Execution.

London, 1842.

THE part taken by the court of Brazil on the outbreak at Buenos Ayres against the Spanish authorities, and during the vacillating state of affairs which followed, was tortuous and suspicious in the extreme. Sometimes their emissaries went to Buenos Ayres, trying to arrange for the succession of Doña Carlota,—sometimes to Monte Video, offering to uphold Elio and the Cortes. Sometimes they acted as if they would make the Banda Oriental their own; and committed, as they gradually encroached upon that territory, many acts of depredation,—some of open hostility.

Elio was at length able to induce them to take a decided part with him, as the legitimate viceroy of the River Plate ; and when pressed by the besieging army from Buenos Ayres, he called the Portuguese troops into the fortress, where they constituted his chief force. Meantime no one viewed with such a keen and watchful eye as Artigas the wily operations of the auxiliaries ; and though he made himself a party to the treaty for raising the siege of Monte Video, he never lent himself cordially to that measure. His jealousy of General Rondeau, the commander of the Buenos Ayres army, and of the influence exercised by it over the affairs of the Banda Oriental, was but poorly masked by his reluctant semblance of cordiality. His hatred of the Portuguese was irreconcileable ; and his ambition to be himself sole arbiter of the affairs of his own native soil gradually became his ruling passion, constantly chafed into action by the real or fancied grievances which he considered were inflicted upon himself.

Under the allegations, therefore, whether founded in truth, or frivolous and vexatious, that the Portuguese, instead of withdrawing to their own territory, were protracting their return, and committing

outrages on the inhabitants of Gualiguay, Arroyo de la China, and Belen ; he attacked and routed them at the latter place ; sent bitter complaints to Buenos Ayres ; and peremptorily demanded reinforcements to enable him to drive the enemy back to their own frontiers.

He next invited Don Elias Galvan, governor of Corrientes, to co-operate with him on the Uruguay ; the Portuguese were worsted in several rencontres ; they complained to the governor of Monte Video ; and, as usual on such occasions, violent and recriminatory letters passed between all the parties to the treaty, each accusing the other of having openly or secretly, scandalously or treacherously, broken it ; so that though the compact was to be firm, binding, permanent, observed with the most scrupulous fidelity, and regarded with the most sacred inviolability, yet not four months had elapsed since its ratification (21st October, 1811) by Elio, when his successor, Vigodet, the Junta, General Sousa, and Artigas, were at variance as to its meaning, and each at daggers drawn, defending his own interpretation of it. The treaty, in short, was given to the winds. Preparations for active hostilities were recommenced on both sides ; the troops of

Buenos Ayres recrossed the Uruguay, and were incorporated with those of Artigas; and this Chief marching to Yapeyú, on the 13th of April, there defeated about nine hundred of the Portuguese.

Ascuenaga, in January of this year, was appointed governor-intendant of Buenos Ayres, in order to relieve the executive from its self-imposed burthen of details.

News were received about this time, published in the "Morning Chronicle" of the 11th September, 1811, that Great Britain had offered her mediation, and Spain accepted it, for the pacification of the Spanish colonies. The British government had already appointed Captain Cockburn, R. N., to proceed to South America on this affair; but as the "*indispensable basis*" of the friendly interference was, that the colonies should acknowledge the Cortes, and send representatives to this body; the mediation, instead of being effective, was met by a bitter tirade on the part of the Junta against the English Government, for its unacceptable and inadmissible interference in a matter so delicate upon such odious conditions.

Notwithstanding this, the Junta, now for the first

time, admitted Englishmen, under certain and not onerous conditions, to the full rank of citizens; and Mr. James Winton and Mr. John Miller, having married young ladies, natives of Buenos Ayres, were the first who availed themselves of the privilege, not much coveted, however, by those who had no immediate ties with the country.

Affairs languished in Peru. Pueyrredon, after his masterly retreat, was reinforced by several small detachments; but in his first affray with the enemy, near Nazareno, which was unfortunate, the Buenos Ayres loss is confessed to have been 137 in killed and wounded.

Güemez, Diaz Velez, and Arze were occupied, after this, in the defence of Tarija, Huamauaca, and Cochabamba; but the campaign moved heavily, till Pueyrredon, having been elected a member of the Junta, was replaced in his command by Belgrano.

On the 29th of March he wrote that his advanced posts were at Moxos, and that Don Pio Tristan, the Peruvian general (that is, fighting for the old system, and for Abascal, the viceroy of Lima), had his head-quarters at Suypacha.

Leaving them there to look at each other for a

season, we shall rapidly glance at a few incidents more properly domestic, as more immediately connected with the capital of the Plate.

In a vessel called the George Canning, on the 13th of March, 1812, San Martin arrived, having held the rank of captain, and having been aid-de-camp, in Spain, to the Marquis of Campigny. San Martin was accompanied by Don Carlos de Alvear, an ensign of carbineers during part of the peninsular campaign. Both, however, were natives of America,—the former, of a small town in Misiones, called Yapeyù; and both were soon destined to take active parts in the revolution. The first thing which San Martin did, was to raise a fine regiment of cavalry, called mounted grenadiers. Of this regiment he was himself colonel and Alvear was appointed major. Things were in so stirring, complicated, and entangled a state, both at home and abroad, that two such men could not long be inactive spectators of them.

It was now determined to call together the long postponed General Assembly,—a legislative body, which it was proposed, however, to invest with unlimited control over the executive Junta. To the Assembly were elected for Buenos Ayres alone one

hundred deputies, reduced, by a remonstrance from the Cabildo, to thirty. The State being in great want of the sinews of war, a forced contribution was levied of 638,000 dollars, (£130,000), which reached, and, of course, displeased, all classes.

The abolition of the Spanish procession of the Royal Standard, as incompatible with liberty and equality, was decreed ; and a much more important abolition followed,—that of the importation, thence-forward, of slaves.

Intercepted correspondence from Goyeneche, detecting his monstrous cruelties, and unheard-of barbarities against all classes of native Americans in Peru, filled the minds of all men with indignation. The Bishop of Salta, as aiding and abetting the modern Nero, was hurried, at twenty-four hours' notice, down to Buenos Ayres, characterised by Belgrano as a “*traidor sordo*,” a sort of adder that could not be charmed, charm you never so wisely. At the same instant, Vigodet, the governor of Monte Video, was remonstrating bitterly with the Bishop of Buenos Ayres, (late of Cordova,) for the scandalous favour shown by his clergy in the Banda Oriental to the “*rebels, thieves, and robbers*,” (meaning the patriots) of that province.

The Brazilians, either urged by Lord Strangford, or tired of a war, which they saw would be endless, with their neighbours of the Banda Oriental and Entre Rios, deputed now, and for once in sincerity, an envoy, Don Juan Rademaker, to conclude, under the guarantee of England, a treaty of peace with Buenos Ayres. The first and most important article of this treaty was, that all assistance should be withdrawn, and thenceforward withheld, from the Spanish authorities in Monte Video; and that the whole Portuguese army should instantly retire from the Banda Oriental, and every other point of Spanish America, over which the Junta claimed jurisdiction. The government gladly accepted the terms; ordered Artigas no further to molest the Brazilian army, on its homeward route; called the Portuguese their dearest friends and allies; and while thus, to the joy of all good patriots, the main obstacle to the capture of Monte Video was removed, Vigodet, stamping and storming in his fortress, now left in comparative solitude, wrote letters full of strong remonstrance, to the Court of Brazil, accusing it of desertion from the holy cause of Ferdinand; and threatening it with the high displeasure of the Cortes.

At this time, Pueyrredon, returned from Peru, took his seat as president of the Junta, and Don Manuel Sarratea, another member of it, was appointed to the civil superintendence of the army destined to operate against Monte Video, and which it was intended to raise to six or seven thousand men.

There arrived most opportunely for its equipment a great number of muskets from North America, where they had been negotiated for, on the principle, however, of value to be received, by Saavedra and Aguirre, aided in their enterprize by an English merchant, Mr. Henry Leigh. A great part of those muskets were paid for by the patriotic ladies of Buenos Ayres out of their pin money.

The marinos were once more signally foiled, on an excursion up the river, undertaken to prevent the crossing from the western to the eastern shores of the Paraná, of the army destined against Monte Video.

Among these prosperous events, one of some importance, and of rather a different character, took place at Patagonia. It was the loss of the whole Buenos Ayres navy. This consisted, at that time, of a vessel carrying four guns, called the "Ketch,"

and commanded by a personage, of the style and title of Commodore Taylor. It was not that Taylor, who became afterwards admiral of the Brazilian Navy, but a restless spirit of the same kidney, who had married a lady called Mary Anne Clarke, as well known (at least to all gentlemen who ever visited Buenos Ayres) as another lady of the same name, who occupies a place in our military annals. The Buenos Ayres Mrs. Clarke, had left her last lodgings in England, for a trip to New Holland, in a ship called the *Bounty*,—the passengers and crew of which, not liking the voyage, took the vessel under their own management ; and eschewing Botany Bay, they straggled, some hither, some thither. Mrs. Clarke* found her way to Buenos Ayres ; became popular by her lively manners, general kindness, and hospitality to strangers ; made a great deal of money in a house which, from an inn, rose to the dignity of a hotel ; and then she married the commodore of the Buenos Ayres navy aforesaid, or rather the commodore married her money.

The Ketch was taken by the royalists who had

* Our worthy friend is still alive, and must now be an octogenarian.

been exiled to Patagonia ; by them she was carried to Monte Video ; and there, as Vigodet had nothing else over which to rejoice, he fired a *feu de joie* over the little caught Ketch.

Belgrano now opened the second campaign against the royalist forces in Peru ; and addressing a magnificent harangue on the occasion to his troops, assured them he would lead them on to glory and to victory. This proclamation was dated from his head quarters at Campo Santo, on the 11th of May.

In six weeks after this, we find the government of Buenos Ayres expressing itself thus :—

“ General Belgrano continues to organize his army, and make active preparations for marching into the interior. He lauds the knowledge, activity, and patriotism of Colonel Baron de Holemburg, and expresses the most perfect confidence in the triumph of liberty over the efforts of tyranny to enslave those provinces. He says, the fire of the revolution burns every day brighter in Cochabamba and elsewhere. Goyeneche intends to invade that province : wretched despot ! does he believe that he will ever be able to put chains upon the valiant Cochabambinos ?”

A division of Goyeneche's army, under General Tristan, overtook the retreating General Belgrano at Tucuman; and there, after a doubtful action on the 23d September, Belgrano, on the 24th, gained a decisive victory over Don Pio de Tristan. Belgrano attributes this victory in a great measure to his having placed his army under the protection of our Lady of Mercedes, whom he denominates his general, and on whose birthday the action was fought.

The forces of the two generals were nearly equal, consisting of about four thousand men on each side. Belgrano speaks of great levies which were to join him from the adjacent provinces; but they had not arrived when the action was fought; and if they had, from their want of discipline, they would have been of little use. As it was, the victory was altogether a brilliant affair, and was celebrated with every demonstration of joy throughout the united provinces. The loss in killed and wounded on the part of Tristan was 1056 men, and on that of Belgrano, only 270. Besides this, three stands of colours were taken, seven pieces of field artillery, ammunition, waggons, stores, &c. &c.

While things were wearing this favourable aspect

for the cause of independence in Peru, Chile, the Banda Oriental, Entre Ríos, and Paraguay, Buenos Ayres herself, the originator of the revolution, and the foster-mother, it may be said, of the infant republics rising up around her, was threatened, in the bosom of her own family, with a domestic convulsion, which, but for a rare providence, would have steeped her in blood, and left her to pine over liberty lost, ere yet it had realized any of its gilded promises.

Don Martín de Alzaga, of whom mention has been already made, was the head and front of the odious conspiracy, by which he expected at once to start up again into plenitude of power.

The following is the account, and we believe a very accurate one, published by the Government, of this affair, on the 10th of July, 1812:—

“Even if the cause of liberty which we uphold had not, on its side, so much of justice as it has, a slight review of the manner in which a gracious Providence has all along presided over it would be sufficient at once to inspire religious awe, and frustrate every attempt to stop the course of events. It is the obstinate pride of our bitter foes alone that could be blinded to such considerations, or refuse

to be humbled by a review of the great and leading events which have marked our career.

“ The unprincipled enemies of America, nevertheless, listening only to the dictates of their own headlong passions,—unrestrained by a recollection of the manner in which their iniquitous plans have been foiled,—have anew meditated, in silence, a mortal blow to the Patria. They formed their combinations and arranged their plans; but as they were glorying in their triumph, at the moment of its anticipated achievement, their project was discovered. The unhallowed edifice they were erecting tumbled down, and they themselves were justly buried under its ruins.

“ A considerable number of European Spaniards of this city had, with secret and watchful precautions, planned a conspiracy on a plan so full of horror, that posterity will shudder as she reads its detail. They had already taken their measures for an insurrection on one of those nights on which the carelessness or confidence of the garrison was most likely to ensure success.

“ The direction of the plot was confided to the Spaniard Martin Alzaga, of whose turbulent and enterprising character many instances were on re-

cord. With a view to action, they had formed their companies and divisions, commanded by the proper officers. The Bethlemite friar, José de las Animas, was appointed commander-in-chief of the cavalry.

“ All the conspirators were to unite at the hospital of the Convalescencia.* Their first step was to have been the getting of the countersign at Baracás, from the guard which they had brought over; and as they calculated on the co-operation of all the Spaniards who had belonged to the army, but were now dismissed, they were to have occupied the points committed to their charge; while the most brave and trustworthy of the conspirators had arms put into their hands.

“ Numerous parties were forthwith to be detached to surprise our men who patrolled the city, and to take their arms. The cavalry was to have attacked the park of artillery, and guard the outlets of the city that no one might escape. The infantry was to have taken by surprise the artillery

* The Convalescencia is a fine and extensive building erected by the Jesuits on an eminence, two miles from the city. The house was occupied as head quarters, and the surrounding grounds as an encampment by General Rosas.

barracks, those of the militia (*civicos*), and of the 2nd regiment. From thence it was determined to march in a united mass to take the fort; to facilitate which they had determined to take the sergeant-major of the town out of his house, and to oblige him to order the guard to open the principal gate of the fortress. At this moment a body of three hundred men was to enter by it, while another of four hundred was to attack the gate of the Socorro, for the lock of which, after making a model of it in wax, they had a key.

“Should they be foiled in these attempts, it was their intention to have fortified themselves in the piazzas of the square of the Recova, and to have starved the garrison out. The conspiracy was to have taken effect at two o'clock in the morning, and at break of day signals, which had been agreed upon, were to have been made to the marinos in the roadstead to land their auxiliaries. In order as well to prevent any movement on the part of the natives, as to convey to them an exaggerated idea of the force under Alzaga, a proclamation was to have been issued imposing the penalty of death upon any American found in the streets, and also upon every Spaniard who should not join the con-

spirators, with such weapons as he might possess. Such were the measures to have been adopted by the rebels.

“ Let us next see what was the object they had in view.

“ The victory being achieved, the members of government, the principal magistrates, American citizens of known respectability and patriotism, and Spaniards addicted to their cause, were to have been arrested, shot, and gibbeted.

“ After this the creoles, the Indians, the castes, and the negroes were to be banished to Monte Video and other parts: for the project was that there should no longer remain in this capital a single individual who was not a European Spaniard, except the families of the conspirators. In order to provide a semblance of population for the capital, left necessarily desolate by such a measure, the Europeans located in the different provinces of the interior were to be brought to Buenos Ayres. The capital was to have been under the command of the author of the conspiracy, Martin Alzaga, without acknowledging any dependence on the governor of Monte Video. It was determined to await the decision of the Cortes, and, by re-establishing the

ascendancy of Spain, to reduce the Americans to a state of servility more cruel and oppressive than ever.

“ Such was the project of our enemies, and such the plan for its execution; but it pleased Providence, at the moment when it was to have been realized, to lay bare the whole history of its depravity. One of the conspirators incautiously spoke of it in the presence of a slave, who, struck by the cruelties about to be committed, and shrinking from the contemplation of so indiscriminate a massacre as that intended, of sons by fathers, brothers by brothers, friends by friends, people of the same country, kith and kin, language, laws, and religion, by one another, communicated to a person in his full confidence what he had just heard. The whole scheme came thus to be revealed to the Government, and after the first judicial investigation, three of the conspirators were shot, and hung up as a public spectacle. The traitor Martin Alzaga, when he found that all was lost, endeavoured to effect his escape; but he was taken, and paid with the forfeit of his life the horrid crime it was his intention to commit.”

Such was the official account given of this

desperate conspiracy; and it must be confessed, that both the Government and people behaved with exemplary moderation, if not excessive leniency on the discovery of a plot which, if successful, would have covered the land with mourning, desolation, and woe.

It was at the same time not to be expected that the chief concocters and directors of such a conspiracy should escape. On the contrary, it could not fail to appear absolutely necessary to the leaders of the revolution, that they should at once make a salutary example of some of the most powerful and implacable of their enemies.

At the head of these stood Don Martin Alzaga. He, with various other distinguished citizens, were summarily tried, and on the most irrefragable proofs, found guilty of a treasonable design to overturn the constitutional government of the country. The record of the judicial proceedings by which Alzaga and his accomplices were condemned to death, was never published; and all we know is, that having taken refuge in the miserable hut of a female slave, he was dragged thence to the capilla, or municipal chapel destined for felons on the eve of execution. Next morning, Alzaga

suffered with undaunted fortitude the extreme penalty of the law: but it will perhaps be sufficient to say, that the executions were limited, on this occasion to that of Alzaga himself, and of four or five more of the principal leaders in the conspiracy,—the man next in rank and wealth to Alzaga being Telechea, a rich and highly respectable Spanish merchant, long established in the city; and, unhappily for himself, surrounded by a large and amiable family.

Public executions in Buenos Ayres take place in *La Plazuela de la Fortaleza*, a large open space, which leads into the Fort, or Government Palace, as it is sometimes called, the ci-devant residence of the Viceroy and his court, and, after the revolution, of the chief magistrate of the republic. In this space, against a low wall, running round the fosse of the fort, a *banquillo*, or low small bench, is placed; and the criminal being seated upon, and tied to it, is shot by a file of soldiers. In cases of aggravated guilt, the body of the culprit is afterwards suspended from a gallows erected close by.

The requisite number of *banquillos* having been placed for Alzaga and his guilty coadjutors,* they

* They were Colonel Centenash; Friar Joseph de las Animas;

were brought forth from *capilla*, or chapel, where, according to Spanish usage, they passed the last twenty-four hours of their life, and a line of soldiers having been formed, they were escorted in procession, and amidst a vast concourse of people, to the fatal banquillo. Alzaga proceeded along the line, supported by the conviction that he was about to surrender his life a martyr to the just cause of his country, in the annals of which he was destined to fill an honourable place. The same undaunted courage which had marked his career, forsook him not for a moment on this its trying close of it. He walked with a firm step, with an upright and noble bearing; he looked around with a deep expression of scorn on the surrounding people; and exhorted his fellow martyrs to meet their doom with the fortitude of patriotic citizens; and refusing to have his eyes bound when placed on the banquillo, he sat in proud tranquillity till the command being given to fire, he was stretched out a corpse on the ground. The execution of the others rapidly followed; the band struck up a national march; the

Francisco Telechea; Matias de la Carrera; Francisco Valdepares; N. Marcó; José Diaz, a smuggler of specie; Pedro Torres, Alzaga's foreman or Capataz, with a few others of minor note.

troops retired; the populace dispersed; and the bodies of the unhappy conspirators were suspended on the gibbets which had been erected for the purpose.

Don Martin Alzaga was a man sixty years of age, with a family of fourteen children, a large fortune, great personal and local influence, of high rank in society, and, could he but have tamed his fiery temper, moderated the cravings of an unprincipled ambition, or mitigated his deadly hatred of the South Americans—the descendants, we may say, of his own loins—he might have died as he lived, if not a beloved member of society, at least a respected one.

The liberty of the slave Ventura, who discovered the conspiracy, was given to him at an expense of three hundred dollars; and he was otherwise rewarded, especially with a medal attached to his arm, on which was inscribed “Por fiel a la patria.” (*For fidelity to the state.*).

Buenos Ayres, thus convulsed within by attempts to wrest from her the liberty to which she aspired, and the tranquillity she desired, was beginning to feel that there were more parties in the state than that of the Europeans discontented, or affecting to

be so, with the present march of affairs. The Americans themselves began to show symptoms of that instability of character, and of that splitting up into many rival parties, headed by aspiring chiefs, or instigated by intriguing politicians, which have worked so perniciously during the course of the revolution, and so unfortunately retarded its progress.

Notwithstanding this, their attention was never wholly withdrawn from the common enemy; alternate victories and defeats attesting their irrevocable determination to make the country their own.

Thus everything at the present moment (September, 1812) indicated active preparations for renewed and more formidable operations than before against Monte Video. But that nothing might be wanting to evade the effusion of blood and avert the other calamities of war, the Buenos Ayres government made overtures of peace anew, and upon reasonable conditions, to Vigodet. They were rejected; and the army of General Rondeau prepared a second time to lay siege to the town. His army consisted of about six thousand men. General Artigas was second in command; and Don Manuel Sarratea, as commissioner and di-

rector-general of affairs, had his head-quarters, with a division of the troops called the division of the north, at Arroyo de la China, on the river Uruguay.

On the 8th of October one of those ebullitions of party feeling to which we have just referred broke forth in Buenos Ayres, but was quieted, as usual, by a change of government. The people, protected by a large body of troops, collected in the great square, and called upon the Cabildo (lord mayor and aldermen) to reassume the authority vested in them on the 25th of May, 1810. The members of the *outgoing* Junta, Pueyrredon, Chiclana, and Sarratea, were of course accused of many and grave delinquencies—especially of throwing obstacles in the way of the elections to the General Assembly, and carrying by intrigue the few which had been effected. The members of the *incoming* executive, however, Pasos, Peña, and Alvarez Jonte, though bound over, by many stringent regulations, to a different line of conduct, were no more likely than their predecessors to carry into practical operation a pure system of election, for the good of the people against the exclusive interests of their betters. One positive condition imposed

by the citizens on the executive was that of calling together the General Assembly within three months from the 8th of October, the day of the assembling or rising of the multitude and military, and that on which the new government was installed. To this were appointed, as secretaries *ad interim*, Don Juan Manuel Luca, Don Tomas Guido, and Don Domingo Trillo.

On the 13th of November the siege of Monte Video was, for the second time, established. All the enemy's sorties, some of them very formidable, were repulsed ; a great scarcity of provisions prevailed within the walls ; and while the marinos on the one hand were landing, in small parties, on the unprotected parts of the Paraná, especially San Nicolas, and sacking them, José Eugenio Culta, with his guerrilla parties, was driving off, or taking prisoner, every enemy to the republican cause on the Banda Oriental. He marched upon Canalones and took it ; he carried off seven hundred head of cattle and eight prisoners from the Cerrito ; he entered Miguelete, and riding forward to within a league of Monte Video, took by surprise a number of outposts.

These operations immediately preceded the

sitting down of Rondeau with his army, as already stated, before Monte Video. He closed the year by a very gallant action on the 31st December, when the enemy, with his whole force of two thousand men, sallied from the fortress, and attacked the besieging troops. But Vigodet, who on this occasion commanded the Montevideans was repulsed with the loss of a great many men in killed and wounded, of a pair of colours, 120 muskets, ammunition, &c.; while Rondeau's loss consisted of only 67 men, in killed and wounded.

The most encouraging feature of the war, was the reassurance by the Court of Brazil, ratified by Lord Strangford, and still more substantially confirmed by the entire evacuation of the Banda Oriental by the Portuguese troops, that it would thenceforward remain neutral in military operations, and in all others, would maintain the best possible understanding with the Argentine republic.

Admiral Fleming having written from Lima some letters, in which he protested Great Britain's determination to bring the colonies again under the control of Spain, and asserted, at the same time, that the Junta had offered to deliver the

country into the hands of Doña Carlota, Lord Strangford assured the Government that such letters were written, and such declarations made, entirely without authority. The sole object of Admiral Fleming's expedition, says the British ambassador at the Court of Rio de Janeiro, was to bring home specie.

A few fiscal regulations were made toward the close of this year, just worth noticing as indicative of a desire to improve. A premium of three per cent., exacted in all transactions, on hard dollars, was abolished as unfair in principle, and complicating mercantile transactions. The monopoly of tobacco was disallowed.

A frank and friendly invitation was held out to foreigners of all nations to settle in the new state; and the principle of artizans taking *apprentices* was enforced.

As illustrative of the persevering efforts of the Spaniards to regain their original ascendancy, we have here to mention that though the last conspiracy was detected, and the leaders of it punished with death so lately as July of this year, the year was not destined to close without something of a similar attempt being made. Various

letters between the conspirators and the most influential individuals in the besieged garrison of Monte Video were intercepted; and they left no doubt that a second attempt at insurrection was at hand.

Five European Spaniards, the most undeniably implicated, were shot, and as usual gibbeted as a public, but loathsome spectacle.

The following regulations were then adopted on the 23rd of December against all European Spaniards :—

1st. That they should not, on pain of death, congregate in one place to a number exceeding three.

2nd. That under the same penalty they should not be found on horseback, either in the capital, or its vicinity; and

3rd. That any one of them detected in an attempt to escape, whether to Monte Video or to any other place occupied by the enemy, should be instantly shot.

Yours, &c.

THE AUTHORS.

LETTER XXXV.

THE AUTHORS to GENERAL MILLER.

Complaints of the Court of Brazil—This Court, and the Government of Buenos Ayres—The Asamblea—Don Carlos de Alvear—Belgrano's Victory in Peru—Terms of Capitulation—Ratified—Expedition from Lima against Chile—Vaccination introduced by Dr. Segurola—Bishop of Cordova—Paraguay—The Prueba and San Pablo—General O'Higgins—Defeat at Vilcapugia.

London, 1842.

A BRAZILIAN vessel of war arrived at Buenos Ayres on the 16th January, 1813, bringing remonstrances from the Court of Rio de Janeiro, and from the British ambassador there, against the conduct of many officers of the army of the Banda Oriental, at the time that Brazil was giving effect to the treaty of peace between the two governments by quietly evacuating the Spanish American territory, in endeavouring to seduce the Portuguese troops, and to bribe their commanders, to join the ranks of Artigas and Rondeau.

The Buenos Ayres government solemnly dis-

avowed all knowledge of such unwarrantable conduct; and while it sent orders for the trial and punishment of the delinquents, reiterated its assurances of amity toward Brazil, respect for the English mediation, and firm purpose to preserve inviolate the treaty of peace so lately concluded. The truth is, that the Junta did *not* know of the underhand work which was going on in the army of the Banda Oriental, especially in that section of it commanded by Artigas. This chief, already determined not to keep terms with the Porteños, took every means in his power, in his own subtle manner and intriguing way, to throw discredit upon their cause, and sow discord among their troops.

On the 31st of January, 1813, the long looked for Asamblea opened its sessions in the capital under the following regulations:—

- 1st. That it is the depositary of the sovereignty of the united provinces of the River Plate, with the title of Sovereign Lord.
- 2nd. That the president be Don Carlos Alvear, the deputy for Corrientes.
- 3rd. That the secretaries be Don Valentin Gomez and Don Hipolito Vieytes.

4th. That the persons of the deputies are inviolable, and can neither be arrested nor judged, except as the assembly shall determine.

5th. That the executive power, with the title of "Supreme," remain in the hands of those who now exercise it, until the assembly shall otherwise determine.

6th. That the executive and all other public bodies do forthwith take the oath of allegiance to the sovereign assembly.

7th. That the executive in issuing the assembly's decrees shall call upon all to take notice that the "Sovereign Assembly has been pleased to decree, &c., as follows:—"

There were some minor regulations on the installation of this august body; great public rejoicings took place; the executive bowed its head; and the deputies of the sovereign assembly, calling themselves the Areopagites of the New World, lost not a moment in further embroiling by anomalous laws and enactments the state which their wisdom was to have saved. The truth is, that at the bottom of all their proceedings lay an intrigue having for its object to pave the way to the directorial power, not

long afterwards assumed by the president of the assembly, the worthy, but youthful, inexperienced, ambitious, and rather hot-headed deputy for Corrientes, Don Carlos de Alvear.

This was that same Alvear who, with the rank of ensign, arrived in the George Canning on the 13th of March, 1812, and was now, fourteen months afterwards, decorated with the rank of colonel, and presiding, in his twenty-fifth year, over a sovereign assembly of doctors, priests, and other venerable dignitaries.*

On the 19th of February the Asamblea declared that no member of the executive, without their sovereign permission, was eligible to the command of any army; and on the 20th, it ordered a change of the Junta, substituting for the actual members

* The Colonel was son of Captain Alvear of the Spanish navy, who commanded the four frigates which were taken off Monte Video by an English force, before any declaration of hostilities was made. Captain Alvear had his wife and family on board. One day he left his ship to visit one of the others, and he took his son Carlos, then a boy, in the boat with him. They had hardly left, when, awful to relate, Alvear's frigate, by some accident, blew up, and the unhappy commander saw his whole family, saving Carlos, miserably perish in a moment. He suffered also a great pecuniary loss. He was taken to England, lived there for many years, and in consideration of his misfortunes and losses, enjoyed a considerable pension to the day of his death from our Government.

the following partisans,—Dr. Nicolas Rodriguez Peña, Dr. Don José Julian Perez, and Dr. Don Antonio Alvarez Jonte.

Though intrigue was thus active, and change thus rapid in the capital, the good genius of Buenos Ayres still presided over her military affairs. Belgrano, on the 20th of February, gained a signal and complete victory over the Limenian army commanded by Tristan, at Salta.

The result of this action was the loss on the part of Tristan of 578 men, among them several officers of rank, in killed and wounded, a great quantity of artillery, ammunition, and baggage, and other *materiel*; and the whole was crowned by a capitulation, of which the following were the conditions :—

1st. The army of Peru (that is, Tristan's army) shall march out of Salta to-morrow, with all the honours of war, the troops of the River Plate remaining in their present position. At the distance of three quadras, the former shall lay down, and deliver up their arms.

2nd. The general, chiefs, and other officers shall on their oaths be bound never again to take arms against the Free States; and they shall answer in the same way for the soldiers whom

General Belgrano may permit to return to their homes in the united provinces of the River Plate, in which are included Potosi, Charcas, Cochabamba, and La Paz.

3rd. General Belgrano agrees to give up the officers and soldiers, then prisoners in Salta, and requests that Tristan will endeavour to bring about with Goyeneche, a general exchange of prisoners taken, from the battle of the Desaguadero inclusive.

4th. The property of individuals of the defeated army as well as of the inhabitants generally of Salta shall be respected, and no one shall be molested on account of his political opinions.

5th. The public treasure shall remain in the treasury till made over, with their accounts, by the officers of that department to General Belgrano.

6th. The detachment of troops in Jujui shall evacuate that territory, without injury to the inhabitants or their property.

7th. General Belgrano allows General Tristan to send, by express, to his general-in-chief a copy of this capitulation.

The officers who most distinguished themselves

in this action were Don Eustoquio Diaz Velez, second in command, who led on the right wing of the army, and received a musket ball through his thigh; Don Martin Rodriguez, commander of the left wing; and the commandant of cazadores, or rifles, Don Manuel Dorrego.

But officers, as well as men, on both sides, behaved with great bravery.

The capitulation was ratified by Goyeneche; it led to the liberation, once more, of Charcas, Cochabamba, Santa Cruz, and Potosi; the governor of which latter place informs the general of the auxiliary army, that on the day of the glorious news reaching them, he had caused their female general, our Lady of Mercedes, to be carried round the town in public procession. The spectacle, he adds, was truly edifying,—“verdaderamente edificante.” With a *naïvété* not inferior to that of the governor of Potosi, Belgrano had some time before informed the sovereign assembly, that its high functions and supremacy had been acknowledged by Salta and Tucuman, “baxo la solemnidad respetuosa de las armas de mi mando.” “Under the imposing solemnity (influential presence we suppose he means), of my armed force.”

As an immediate consequence of the battle of Salta, Goyeneche retreated from Potosi, precipitately enough, but not in such a hurry as to neglect the public treasure. He carried it off to Oruro, where, for the present, he made a halt.

On the 14th of April, of this year (1813) the Buenos Ayres government received a most important despatch from the Junta of Chile, intimating the defeat, by Don José Miguel Carrera, of the vanguard of the army sent by the Viceroy Abascal from Lima, under the command of General Varela, to invade Chile on the south. The armies met at Yeras Anenos, near the river Maule, and by a gallant *coup de main*, the forces of the viceroy were discomfited. On the 25th of May, the same General Carrera took from the royalists, Concepcion, the capital of southern Chile; and on the 29th he captured Talcahuano, the seaport, on the bay of the same name, of that ancient, though now dilapidated, metropolis. He also took a Spanish vessel, with fifty thousand dollars on board, coming in aid of the Limenian army; and by other rapid and dashing exploits, paved the way to the power which he subsequently attained.

In May of this year, an establishment was founded for vaccination under the philanthropic

and scientific superintendence of Dr. Segurola; who with the patience of a philosopher, and the influence of eloquent persuasion, supported by experimental operation, set himself about the arduous task of combating the prejudices of the people against a certain cure for a disease, which for centuries had been the scourge of their race. From at first being obliged to *drag* the parents and their children to the institution, he had the satisfaction to find them at length crowding the doors of it, till he was obliged to call in one assistant after another, in order to get through the work of the day. To the credit of the government be it said, that the persevering physician,* was ably, liberally, and zealously supported by the state.

The bishop of Cordova, Orellana, the inveterate old Spaniard, who had joined Liniers, and harangued his troops on to battle, openly joined the patriot cause, gave up his tithes of Cordova, and offered all the income connected with his mitre, as a free oblation to the Patria. This was a great step in advance; for a bishop in South America, as in some other places not quite so remote, is a person of high political influence.

* He was, in point of fact, however, a dignitary of the church.

In Paraguay, matters were travelling to a crisis, especially as regarded their intercourse with Buenos Ayres. As related in our former work, Señor Herrera was there, as ambassador from Buenos Ayres; terms of a commercial and political treaty were discussed; but in the meantime the motley congress, as already pourtrayed, rejected all terms, proclaimed Francia first consul, agreed to all his jaundiced proposals, and sent off Mr. Herrera, with just sufficient protection to prevent his falling a prey to that jealousy which Francia had excited against him.

On the 21st of June, Belgrano entered Potosi at the head of the auxiliary troops; and a brisk affair took place on the island of Martin Garcia, which was carried, against a Spanish force of seventy men and three pieces of artillery, by Lieutenant Caparroz, who charged them with eighteen mounted dragoons.

In June of this year (1813) General Goyeneche, commander-in-chief for the Spaniards of their arms in Peru, disgusted with intrigue, disheartened by defeat, and in despair of permanent success, resigned the command into the hands of Hinostroso, appointed at Lima to succeed him.

As a counterpart, however, at once to the discouraging aspect of affairs for Spain in Peru and Chile, the Spanish frigate *Prueba*, soon afterwards followed by the ship of the line of the same nation the *San Pablo*, sailed into the harbour of Monte Video with a reinforcement against the patriots of two thousand men.

In Chile, the indefatigable Don Miguel Carrera besieged Chillan, but was forced to retire, and subsequently to raise the siege, even after a successful affair with the besieged.

This year was conspicuous for bringing out upon the stage of the revolution, the celebrated Chileno, General O'Higgins, then a colonel of the army, who with a force of two hundred men, repulsed, after a severe action, at Angeles, in his native country, five hundred of the enemy.

Once more things looked louring upon the patriot cause in Peru. Belgrano suffered a severe defeat at Vilcapugiò, which, as those things were generally managed, he first called a victory,—then a doubtful action,—and subsequently a disaster; till he at last confesses that the Spanish General Pezuela, had remained completely master of the field,—had gained, in short, a decided victory. Meantime, two

more revolutionary chiefs burst forth into notice, destined, at subsequent periods considerably to distinguish themselves. The one, La Madrid, attacked the enemy's outposts, amounting to thirty men ; the other, Don Hilarion de la Quintana, with a few recruits, rushed in upon the Spaniards at Gualiguaychù, and drove five hundred men on board of their ships. This was part of an expedition which had sailed from Monte Video, with what object was never known, shortly after the arrival there of the two Spanish ships of war, transports, and troops. They landed on various parts of the coast ; but were invariably repulsed with loss, and obliged to return to Monte Video, to tell their hapless tale.

The duties on imports were lowered this year to twenty-five per cent., *ad valorem*.

Yours, &c.

THE AUTHORS.

LETTER XXXV.

THE AUTHORS to GENERAL MILLER.

Intrepidity of the Portefios—The Director Posadas—The Ketch—Creation of a Naval Power—General San Martin, and Affairs of the Interior—General Alvear—A Jubilee in Buenos Ayres—General Success of the Patriots—Admiral Brown—Capture of the Fleet of Monte Video—His Triumphant Entry into Buenos Ayres—Mr. White.

London, 1842.

THIS year (1814) was one of the most stirring interest, bold enterprise, and well earned success “*per mare ac terram*,” which had hitherto distinguished the intrepidity, or stamped with the character of persevering gallantry, the energies of the Porteños, the natives of Buenos Ayres.

All the men employed on the stage of action were more or less men of talent. Posadas, the director, was of a stayed, reflecting, though a little too bending character. Herrera, his secretary, was shrewd, penetrating, quick, eloquent, and a complete *homme d'affaires*. Rondeau, as a commander, was cautious, circumspect, and yet sufficiently daring; while Alvear, who superseded him

in the command of the army which besieged Monte Video, was quick, mercurial, ambitious, full of enterprise, daring, and courage. But he that occupied the proscenium, as hero of the piece, counselled and assisted by a Mr. White, a citizen of the United States of North America, was a countryman of our own, William Brown,—a sort of second Cochran, or Napier,—admiral of the Buenos Ayres fleet. There never before had been such a thing, under independent colours, as a fleet on the River Plate, till White and Brown called it into existence. The basis of it was a little ketch already mentioned, which, though no pirate, moved upon the waters as if it had had the black flag nailed to its mast, spreading, under the direction of one undaunted spirit, consternation among the enemies of the state. They were, it must be confessed, rather chicken-hearted ; for *ketch* and *diablo* became pretty nearly synonymous terms among the marinos.'

White was one of those subtle spirits, and Brown one of those daring and original ones, whom it was impossible to approach without recognizing in them something like a flash of lightning. Accordingly, merchants sold them their ships upon easy terms,—and sailors deserted from all other vessels to man Brown's little fleet. He weeded

the pulperias of their best customers, and all at once appeared at the head of ten or twelve *quasi* men of war, showing their teeth through their port-holes, having the Buenos Ayres flag at their main, and looking out for prey, under their lynx-eyed admiral.

Then, in the interior, there was San Martin, governor of the province of Cuyo, already scheming his gigantic plan of crossing the Andes, retaking Chile, and thence proceeding to the gates of Lima, in Peru. The Carreras, Makena, and O'Higgins were all making headway against the common enemy, on the shores of the Pacific ; and in Peru, Güemes and Rondeau were pushing their slow but sure encroachments upon the territory occupied by the army of the Limenian General Pezuela. Our old Paraguayan friend and universal *compadre*, Don Gregorio de la Cerda, was secretary to the government of Cordova ; and, be it permitted us to add, that Doctor Bargas, of Paraguay celebrity (never so inflated in his life), appeared in costume in Buenos Ayres on a diplomatic mission from his native city of Mendoza.

But to enter a little more into detail. Alvear was gazetted, on the 27th December, 1813, commander-in-chief of the army of Buenos Ayres, and

marched it out to the Olivas, about three leagues distant, for the purposes of drill and general organization. The urgency of pushing matters to a crisis was apparent; and in order to liberate the troops of the garrison for field operations, all citizens, under fifty years of age, were peremptorily ordered to enlist in the various bodies of militia then organized. A loan was raised of five hundred thousand dollars, about one hundred thousand pounds sterling; the supreme power was delegated to *one* individual, Don Gervasio Antonio Posadas; and his inauguration to power was celebrated with all the pomp and splendour usual on such occasions.

It is very delightful to witness a night of public jubilee in Buenos Ayres. The whole inhabitants,—literally the whole, except one or two servants left to keep the houses, sally forth, in full dress, to the great square. Two or three bands of music generally play from under the piazzas of the mayoralty house, or Cabildo, and the bands of some of the regiments perambulate the city, followed by thousands of the inhabitants of all classes. Lemonade is served in the market-place, eau sucré, fruit, and flowers. The Cabildo is lit up. Many parties have

been invited, and many not, to a grand ball to be given there; but no person, genteelly dressed, is refused admittance.

You may make one of the party, without knowing a soul, and yet, if you have either speculation or address, you may dance all night with the **nicest** women in the room, and call and make their acquaintance at their houses the next day.

So it was on occasion of the election of Posadas to the presidency, combined as it was with many cheering anticipations as to the future prospects of the country.

On the 12th of February, San Martin was appointed to the command of the army in Tucuman; and in March of that year Rondeau was laying close siege to Monte Video.

Several skirmishes and rencontres took place in Chile, in all of which the patriot commanders, Carrera, Makena, and O'Higgins had the advantage. So had San Martin in his affairs with the enemy in Tucuman.

Alvear embarked, on the 7th of May, from Buenos Ayres for Colonia, with a considerable reinforcement of troops, to strengthen the army which was besieging Monte Video, and of which

army (Rondeau being superseded and sent to Peru to make way for the young soldier), Alvear took the command, on the 17th of May.

On the day of his becoming general of the forces, he announced that the antagonist fleets, that of Buenos Ayres, under the command of Admiral Brown, and that of Monte Video, commanded by Michelena, after two days of calm, and of slowly hovering, or remaining motionless, in sight of each other, had, upon the springing up of a breeze, gone off,—Brown in pursuit of the Montevideans, and raking their sterns as he went along. The cannonading became brisker and brisker, till at length feebler and feebler about three o'clock A.M., it wholly ceased. So reports Alvear from Miguelete, near Monte Video.

Here is Admiral Brown's account of the action, which, in the meantime, had taken place, between the contending squadrons:—

“On board the *Hercules*, in front of
Monte Video, 19th May, 1814.

“ To Don Juan Larrea, Secretary of State, and
Commissioner of the Naval Equipment.
“ SIR,—For the information of his Excellency the
Supreme Director, I have the greatest pleasure in

informing your Lordship, that at daybreak on the 14th of this month, the enemy's squadron weighed anchor, and sailed from the port of Monte Video. The ships composing it were, the corvettes Mercurio, Mercedes, Neptune, and Paloma; the brigantines San José, Hyena, and Cisne; a goleta, the Launch of Castro; the felucca Fama, and lugger Saint Carlos. They had determined, it seems, to take, and carry into Monte Video the small squadron which I commanded. It consisted of the corvettes Hercules, Belfast, Agreeable, and Zephyr; the brig Nancy; the polacca Nancy; and smack Santissima Trinidad.

“ From the first, I had determined not to commit myself to an encounter near Monte Video, but at some distance from it; and this object I effected with the loss of only two men killed, and one wounded, in the course of a feigned attack, in which the vessel principally engaged was the Hercules.

“ The calm which came upon us enabled the enemy to gain some advantages, by means of large launches; but I was not sorry for this, as it induced him to steer eastward; and as the wind changed towards the evening, I was enabled to cut off his retreat, which he seemed anxious to realize.

“ As the wind continued from the south-east, and there was a considerable swell, both squadrons were forced to anchor at the distance of about a league from each other. They remained in this position, a little to the east of the Bueco, till eight o'clock at night, we keeping, by means of our night-glasses, the enemy in sight every moment.

“ The enemy manifested a decided inclination to withdraw from the engagement ; we, by following him, to force it on.

“ The ketch Hyena, which was ahead of the squadron, was at gunshot distance from the Hercules, but after she had received two broadsides of cannister-shot and ball, availing herself of her superior sailing, she separated from the Spanish squadron. The Spanish commander was on board of her, preferring safety to conquest. At eight o'clock, the night being very dark, the enemy weighed, and made off ; nor was it till two o'clock the following day, that we discovered, and, by towing, made every effort to overtake him. A few broadsides from the Hercules threw the sternmost ships of the enemy into such confusion, that in a few minutes, the corvettes Neptune and Paloma surrendered, without the loss, on our part, of a single man. The

other vessels of the Monte Video squadron made off while we were taking possession of the captured ships; but the brig *Cisne*, the *Balandra de Castro*, and a goleta, finding escape impossible, ran on shore, when the goleta was taken, and the other two were burnt. The victory has been complete; and I hope your Excellency will approve of my conduct on the occasion.

(Signed) "WILLIAM BROWN."

This action was at once the prelude to the fall of Monte Video, and the true cause of it. The garrison, closely besieged by the army of Alvear, and now shut out from the means of obtaining provisions by sea, became sensible of its desperate state, and thought of capitulation.

Brown landed at Buenos Ayres on the 25th of May, the anniversary of the revolution, bringing, in the train of his flotilla the captured ships, five hundred prisoners, including many officers of rank, a vast quantity of military stores—to say nothing of the enemy's ships burnt, nor of the whole having been effected with the loss, on the part of the Buenos Ayres admiral, of two men killed, and one wounded.

The gallant Englishman—an honour to this country, as he would be to any other—was received with acclamations by the whole population of Buenos Ayres, crowded on the pier and public promenade to witness his triumphal entry.

The modest man acquitted himself with unfeigned humility, and won upon the inhabitants, if possible, as much by this as he had done by his acknowledged intrepidity and undaunted bravery. The day was celebrated by festivities of every kind—“Viva Brown,” and “Viva la patria,” being the magic words which called forth loud and reiterated shouts of triumph and of admiration from assembled thousands.

Every officer in the fleet received a step of promotion; and Buenos Ayres began to consider herself, already, as a great maritime power, without calculating that she had not the means of supporting a navy, nor that the one which was magically created by the genius of White, to be ephemerally employed by the activity of Brown, would have brooms at the mast-head of each ship,—indicating that it was for sale,—the moment these active spirits should cease to move upon the deep.

Our next letter shall treat of the taking of Monte

Video by Alvear,—a much easier enterprise, in his hands, than it was in those of Sir Samuel Auchmuty, when, for the first time, he bombarded and took it by assault.

Your's, &c.,

THE AUTHORS.

LETTER XXXVII.

THE AUTHORS to GENERAL MILLER.

General Alvear takes Monte Video—Otorguez—Contradictory understanding in regard to the Capitulation—Decree about Artigas—Honours conferred on Artigas—Buenos Ayres and Artigas—Alvear's Prosperous State of Affairs—Attempts of Buenos Ayres to coerce the Provinces—The Abuse of her Power.

London, 1842.

THE way having been paved, by the brilliant action of Admiral Brown, for the occupation of Monte Video, and the fortress being thenceforward so straitened by sea and land as to leave no alternative to the besieged between starvation and surrender, on the 20th of June, 1814, the governor, Don Gaspar Vigodet, surrendered this place, by capitulation, to the Buenos Ayres general. What the terms were of this capitulation was not clearly known, but it was generally believed that they were honourable to the Spanish commander and garrison. They were never, however, published,

the account of the whole affair being transmitted verbally to the Supreme Director of Buenos Ayres, by one of Alvear's confidential officers, Colonel French.

Certain it is, that when the Buenos Ayres forces took possession of the citadel and forts, the Spanish troops were still there, and, it was generally understood, were to march out with all the honours of war. But on the 23rd of June, three days after the capitulation, General Alvear believing, or affecting to believe, that there was some sinister view in the Spanish governor Vigodet's withholding the ratification, declared the place to have surrendered *at discretion*: 150 of his officers, and upwards of 700 men, were shut up, as prisoners, in the "House of the Negros," and the large bakehouse of Perez, established without the walls.* They were thence shipped off, as prisoners of war, to Buenos Ayres. How far this conduct was justifiable, we possess not the means of pronouncing. Alvear may, or he may not, have had good grounds upon which to act as he did.

* See Alvear's dispatch to the Supreme Director, dated 30th June, 1814.

Having intercepted a letter to the officer in command of the Spanish troops from Colonel Otorguez, inviting them to join his army, Alvear determined to attack this opponent, whom he calls a "caudillo," or unlicensed chief. Otorguez begged leave to decline the rank assigned him, styled himself leader of the Orientales, and required of Alvear that Monte Video should be given up to its legitimate masters.

Alvear routed this so-called rebel near Las Piedras, a town not far from Monte Video; and henceforward the whole Banda Oriental and Entre Ríos were at the feet of the magisterial Buenos Ayres.

Ambition now began to peep forth. Having reaped both his own laurels and those of the men who, in the brunt of the action had preceded him, Alvear prepared for greater things in a different field.

Certainly under him Monte Video was taken, the Banda Oriental pacified, and, more extraordinary than either achievement, a truce was concluded with Artigas, and in consequence of it the following decree issued by the Supreme Director of Buenos Ayres :—

“OFFICIAL.

“*Buenos Ayres, August 17, 1814.*

“As it appears, from the correspondence intercepted at Monte Video, that Don José Artigas has taken no part in the coalition proposed by some of the officers of the Banda Oriental with the (Spanish) chiefs of the fortress; and in reference to his conduct subsequently to his proscription, as well as to the treaty entered into with him by Don Carlos de Alvear, I have resolved, with the advice of my council of state, to declare him a faithful servant of his country, to reinstate him in all the privileges connected with the rank, honours, and prerogatives of colonel of militia, and to confer upon him, moreover, the authority, style, and title of General-Commandant of the Oriental territory of Monte Video. Neither, in any of these appointments, shall any former decrees of the Government be held as detracting from his merit, nor as circumscribing or condemning his peculiar opinions.

“Let this decree be circulated, by my secretary of state, among all the provinces, and published in the ministerial gazette.

(Signed) “**GERVASIO ANT. DE POSADAS.**”

Yet Artigas was the man for whose head, a few months before, a premium of six thousand dollars had been offered ; who had been covered with every obloquy which language could supply ; and who, though the hardiest and most enterprising officer of the whole revolutionary corps d'armée, had been sneered at by the youngsters of the new military school, and by grave senators pronounced a nuisance, only to be exterminated by proscription.

What was the secret of their now altered tone, which condescended, after all, to grant Artigas limited powers, to which present expediency made him subscribe, but at which he laughed in his sleeve, while he harboured in his restless and ambitious soul, projects of a much higher character ?

As regards Artigas the answer is, that he saw in Otorguez, a formidable rival to his own aspirations of becoming supreme chief of the Banda Oriental ; that the Buenos Ayres forces were too formidable, just then, for resistance ; and that by appearing willingly to co-operate *with* them, he might thwart and frighten his adversary Otorguez. The latter also aspired at supreme command ; and such a pretension, on his part, was as smoke in the eyes of Artigas the Colonel of Blandenguez.

On the other hand, the Buenos Ayreans were not unwilling to have Artigas pitted against Otorquez. The whole thing, however, was as a sore, not healed but thinly coated over, and upon any little chafe or scratch, ready to break out anew. Buenos Ayres, in the meantime, was apparently mistress of the destinies of all the surrounding provinces; and Alvear not only seeing this, but knowing that he had been so prominent an agent in bringing affairs to their present bearing, determined at once to play the part of principal actor in the political drama.

He got the Supreme Director, Posadas, to name Don Nicolas Rodriguez Peña, Alvear's own intimate friend, a mere tool in the hand of his master, to the head of affairs in Monte Video. The governor elect was received with regal honours, installed, and Alvear, in a flourishing address (27th July, 1814), took leave of his comrades in arms, and hastened to Buenos Ayres.

Never, since the commencement of the revolution, was she in so "pingüe," or flourishing a state.

Pezuela was retreating before the auxiliary army of Peru, incapable of withstanding the desultory and guerilla warfare made against him by Rondeau

and Güemez; the decided feeling of the inhabitants was also against the Peruvian general; the disasters in Chile, and the fluctuating, feverish, and excited state of politics in Lima, all made Pezuela, though an able general, tremble in his shoes.

These circumstances, which, if turned to their proper account, would have laid the foundation of the permanent power, and undivided sway of Buenos Ayres, tended only to her overthrow.

Elated and inflated, its present administration began to adopt measures hateful to the provinces, rudely to overthrow their associations connected with independence, by dictating to them obnoxious laws, and by sending her own satraps to give them effect; incorporating one province with another, and granting them the privilege (save the mark) of sending deputies to the Asamblea, *dependent* on the government in chief.

The agitation succeeded in chilling some, disgusting others, and exciting in all a spirit of hostility, not the less inveterate, because it lay smothered, for a season, under the overwhelming pressure of the vast power of the capital.

She decreed the province of Entre Ríos to be *one* province under her control; and she incorporated

the different departments of Tucuman, Santiago del Estero, and Catamarca into another. To all these she sent her own nominees as governors, fiscal officers, lawyers, and employés; who, not content with the quiet exercise of their lucrative appointments, were not unfrequently extortioners.

The beaux of the country towns fell prostrate before the polished Porteños; and the inhabitants, without knowing how, began to feel that not even their houses were their own.

These circumstances brought about a reaction however, which made Buenos Ayres recoil within herself, and feel that the abuse of power is sure, in the end, to visit its authors with heavy pains and penalties.

Your's, &c.

THE AUTHORS.

LETTER XXXVIII.

THE AUTHORS to GENERAL MILLER.

Don Carlos de Alvear—Public Men are Public Property—Alvear elected Supreme Director—His State—Is a little shaken—The Coalition—Artigas Supreme Protector—Fate of Alvear's followers—His Promotions—The Battle of Sipé Sipé.

London, 1842.

DON CARLOS DE ALVEAR was, we are happy to add, *is*, (for he is still in the land of the living,) a man of good family, of soldier-like appearance, and deportment,—shrewd, brave, generous, and in his manners most like a gentleman. There was a tinge of aristocracy, both in his appearance and in his feelings, which, diminishing with his years, and sobered down by experience, are now not so observable.

When, flushed with the conquest of Monte Video and the Banda Oriental, not more than twenty-five years of age, with a splendid uniform, and a still more splendid wife,—the admiration of one sex, the envy of the other,—Alvear came to Buenos Ayres, big with the project of being elected “Supreme Director” of the State,—his bearing and carriage went rather beyond the patience and tole-

ration of his countrymen. For one friend, he probably made ten enemies. The weak point of his character was want of originality of mind, and firmness of purpose. He got surrounded by *Doctores*, went to leeward in the hands of cunning statesmen, could seldom hold his wind (as mariners say) against the insetting tide of adulation, and was *so* kind, that he could seldom refuse to the captain who approached him with humility and deference the brevet rank of major, to the major that of lieutenant-colonel, and to the lieutenant-colonel that of colonel. From those who were his flatterers, as well as fancied friends, to whom he looked for military support, he withheld nothing.

Respecting General Alvear, as we both do,—long intimate with him, as we both have been,—a friend of ours, as we believe he now is, though we *may* something extenuate, we shall certainly set down nought in malice; not one word that we should be ashamed to read to General Alvear himself, in his quiet retreat from military and political jangle; nor which his own candour, liberality, and good sense would refuse to admit as true.

At the same time, General Alvear, like all public men, is now a sort of public property; and while

he has a right to exact an impartial picture of his character and actions, not daubed with the rude brush of revolutionary passions, passing party, or personal enmity, he yet cannot expect, and we are sure does not desire, to stand ensconced behind his good qualities alone, as a bulwark, without some breach being made, some scaling attempted, of the weaker points of his character.

These remarks, though specially applicable, in the present case, to Geneal Alvear, we desire to be considered as the *norte*, the fundamental principles, upon which we shall proceed in treating of all the South American great men ; and so much being premised, proceed we now to historical facts a little in detail.*

On the 10th of January, 1815, Posadas, reluctantly, but with apparent good will, resigned the supreme directorship into the hands of the conqueror of Monte Video. He was elected with all pomp, ceremony, and legality. The senior writer of these letters was at a balcony opposite to the cathedral, when the imposing procession, after hearing Te Deum, issued from the venerable pile. Alvear attracted all eyes ; and though he appeared a little pale and trembling, under his accumulated

* See Appendix.

honours, yet he walked upright in the midst of the cortège, and seemed to feel that he was the greatest personage there. In the afternoon Mr. J. P. R. dined at the fort, with about a hundred others; and so far in the evening had the young director recovered from his morning's trepidation, that he gaily mingled in the dance at the palace, to which every respectable inhabitant of Buenos Ayres was invited. He showed, already, that he felt himself at home. His manners were easy, affable, and natural; and the buoyant conviction of what he now was,—the first man in the state,—shed its influence on all around.

Pleasant are the smiles and condescension of princes;—there is a bewitching radiance and enchantment in them, of which the value is only appreciated when they are withdrawn.

One of Alvear's first measures was to divide the army into three sections,—one under the command of himself, another under that of Rondeau, and the third under that of Estanislao Soler.

Herrera, the old Paraguay friend of J. P. R., and unsuccessful ambassador to Francia, clever, astute, full of calculation and sagacity, was secretary of state; and a famous state did he and his

master set up. Before you could see Herrera, you must needs see an understrapper; and before you could see Alvear, you must needs pass through the hands of Señor Herrera. Then his Excellency, pacing about in the large state-room of the palace, received you with a very slight bow, talked *en diplomatiq*ue, said he would take time to consider, and you received your congé, as you had been admitted to your audience, with most gentleman-like froideur. Nothing but time, or old friendship, or objects favourable to the director's personal views, could thaw his dignity. He instituted a fashion altogether new among the South Americans—even in the time of the viceroys—that of never appearing in public but with a sort of royal escort of mounted grenadiers, and he abstained from going to private parties. All this was distasteful to the republican but haughty Porteños; and Alvear, having no party in the provinces, no feelings in common with the Gauchos, who pronounced him a fop, as he them barbarians, soon began to feel that the directorial chair, so far from being a sinecure, was shaking him to pieces.

He was fretted to death, but too proud to give in; and as he rode through the streets with

his dashing escort, it was evident that he was a man ill at ease. Feeling that his tenure of *quasi regal* state was far from secure, he became jealous of all those who belonged not to his own party. Arrests and banishments were frequent, though only in one instance, we believe, were any of his enemies led to execution. The men of the Director in the provinces followed in the footsteps of their chief; the army, as already stated, was divided into three divisions, of which that in Peru was entrusted to Rondeau, that of the Banda Oriental to Soler, and that of Buenos Ayres and the adjoining towns and provinces was under the command of Alvear himself. Fierce and high-sounding decrees were fulminated against treason and conspiracy; and as the arrests took place mostly at midnight, a general fear and gloom pervaded the community.

Convinced, at length, that nothing but sheer military proponderance could uphold his tottering power, the Director, on the 3rd of April, 1815, marched his whole army out of Buenos Ayres to an encampment at the Olivos, distant about six miles from the city. He there kept recruiting and drilling his force, while the militia did garrison

duty in it, General Soler being governor-intendente.

One of the most extraordinary coalitions on record, among the South Americans, whether we consider the unanimity or extent of it, now took place. In all the interior provinces, from the base of the Andes to Entre Ríos, from Cape Horn to Peru, there had, ever since Alvear's election, been hollow and portentous murmurs—indicative, like distant thunder, of a terrible coming storm. At length it burst upon the devoted head of the Director, and crushed his power to atoms.

Artigas had now the ascendant in the Banda Oriental, and of course all the towns there were against the Director. Our old friend, Candioti, was at the time governor of Santa Fé, and invited his crony, Don Pèpe (that is, Artigas) to come over with his troops and rid them of the hated Porteños. Artigas came, the Buenos Ayreans in Santa Fé fled, and the news spreading like wildfire over the length and breadth of the land, every town and province pronounced, by acclamation, Artigas supreme and most excellent protector of the provinces of the River Plate. Three divisions of Alvear's own army declared against him, the largest

being that of Canelones, commanded by Colonel Alvarez. Confounded and bewildered by these movements, originating wholly in dislike to himself personally, and to his government, Alvear was shaken, but not subdued.

He menaced the town with his army from without. Hereupon fosses were cut, stockades thrown up, every citizen armed, and preparations not less formidable than those made for the reception of General Whitelock, were now adopted to repel an attack meditated by one of their own countrymen.

Simultaneously with this movement the different armies in the provinces, Artigas being at the head of that at Santa Fé, prepared to march upon the obnoxious Director, whom now they styled a rebel.

Seeing that the game was fairly up with him, and beginning to distrust many of his followers, Alvear surrendered at last the directorial staff, which he had only wielded three little months. He did not bring his troops to an engagement, stipulating only for the safety of his property, and liberty to take refuge on board of the British frigate. These terms were granted; but all his adherents were left to their fate, and cast into prison under terrible menaces of confiscation and death.

The South Americans, however, are essentially a goodnatured people, and every person there has a *compadre*, or protector, of some kind to make interest for him. So that after the heat of the moment had passed, and the state prisoners had lingered quite comfortably in their quarters for about a month, they were, with two or three exceptions, liberated, kept their goods and chattels, and returned to their families.

Alvear might probably have landed if he had pleased, but he thought himself in better custody on board of an English frigate than on shore.

The troops all returned to their allegiance, Artigas recrossed the Paraná, and Alvarez Tomas took quiet possession of the government. But most of the inland towns pronounced against any further dependence on Buenos Ayres ; and thus was kept alive and increased that *split* between the capital and the provinces which has been, and still continues to be, the pest of the land and the bane of its prosperity.

All the promotions made by Alvear were subjected to strict revision, and seven-eighths of them cancelled. So ended this serious affair without bloodshed, or the gratification of more than a passing spirit of party malice or personal dislike.

San Martin was now elected governor of Mendoza, which, like the other towns, declared its independence of Buenos Ayres, but, like them, professed itself ready to enter with it, on terms of reciprocity and equality, into treaties of commerce and alliance.

Everything began to wear a more favourable aspect, and especially in Peru, where Rondeau pushed his vanguard to Potosi, and took possession of Pezuela's entrenchments at Cotagayta.

Soler resigned his command of the army in the Banda Oriental, and was replaced by Alvarez on the 3rd of June. Rondeau remained in Potosi, and accepted his appointment as Supreme Director of Buenos Ayres; but he continued with the auxiliary army in the hope of bringing the Limenian general to a decisive action. This latter, with four thousand men, kept retreating upon La Paz and Oruro, before the Buenos Ayrean army, of about the same force, and of which the head-quarters were at Ayouma. On the 26th of September Pezuela was at Oruro, and on the 2nd of October Rondeau at Chayanta.

Although on the 24th of October the advance posts of the two armies met, and the Buenos

Ayreans claimed the best of the day, it is certain that they were repulsed ; and on the 29th of the same month Rondeau was defeated at Sipé-Sipé, with the loss of two thousand men. He retreated with precipitation to La Plata, where he was on the 7th of December, with a view to recruiting his army in the province of Cinti, and once more trying his fortune in the field with the Limenian general, Pezuela. This officer seems always to have been too much for the Buenos Ayreans, whenever he could tempt them to come near the Desaguadero.

Among the miscellaneous events of this year may be mentioned the commencement of General San Martin's preparations for crossing the Andes ; and the death of Candiote, the patriarch, and at the time also governor of Santa Fé.

Osorio, the Spanish general, was in possession of Chile ; a desultory but successful warfare was going on in Cochabamba. Vague rumours were afloat, and disturbed the people, of the equipment of a large expedition in Spain, with a view to the complete reconquest of all the revolted colonies : but it was destined never to come. Your's, &c.,

THE AUTHORS.

LETTER XXXIX.

THE AUTHORS TO GENERAL MILLER.

Forced Loans—Exportation of specie prohibited—Affair of Sipé—Sipé—Education—Splits among the Americans—Sovereign will of the people—A Bando—Resolutions of the people—Remarks—The Government's quarrel with Captain Fabian—Tribute of justice to his Excellency Don Manuel de Moreno—The people again assemble—General Viamont—Despatch from Tucuman—The National Congress at Tucuman—The Spanish Minister at Washington—Pueyrredon elected Director.

London, 1842.

THE year 1816 commenced a system, which was not despotic merely, but laid a foundation of fraudulent principle, unjust and unequal taxation, which, when carried out, brought the finances of the country into complete disorganization. This system was one of “forced loans;” of which the very terms are odious and contradictory. For how can that be a loan, in the ordinary sense of the word, to which you are *forced* to contribute?

Yet the South American Governments, devoid of foresight, or extravagant beyond their means, were continually harassing the people, and exciting their

odium, by the levy of loans,—one might almost say, at the bayonet's point.

In this spirit, on the 20th of January, 1816, a loan was exacted of the inhabitants of Buenos Ayres (foreigners included) of two hundred thousand dollars, under conditions, at once inquisitorial and irresistible.

Another great mistake of the infant Government was the prohibition, under heavy penalties, of the exportation of specie; as if any fiscal regulations could, *de facto*, frustrate the ingenuity of the man, who, having introduced his wares into the country, paid duties on them, and sold them, had still to take the proceeds away, in the manner most profitable to himself.

The stringent measures resorted to by the Government, were said to be adopted for preventing contraband; that is, to make a man surrender his own interests for the good of the community; but where is such a man to be found?

From Tupiza, on the 25th of December, 1815, Rondeau writes to the Government, fully acknowledging the disastrous affair of Sipé Sipé, and urgently requiring a further stock of arms and ammunition.

Anxious to promote education, the Government, on the 20th of January, 1816, issued a decree for the forwarding of the mathematical sciences, which it characterizes (how truly we leave our readers to judge) as one of the elements which make up the "character of virtuous and illustrious citizens." We fear they have found out, since then, that for this purpose, something higher than squares, cubes, and conic sections is necessary.

In the early part of this year, January 20, 1816, the making of arms was commenced in Buenos Ayres; and Don Estevan Luca, the master of the ordnance, was promoted and rewarded for his skill and science in the manufacture of muskets and sabres.

As a sample of the sort of eruptions, which ever and anon were now breaking out in Buenos Ayres, all more or less consequent upon the "*split*" caused by Saavedra's headlong career, take the following official account given in the Buenos Ayres Gazette, of the 17th of February, 1816:—

"It is not easy to give an account of the circumstances which happened in this city a few days ago. The substance of it is, that the Director, *pro tempore*, (Don Ignacio Alvarez,) thought it neces-

sary to reform the provisional statute, and to assemble the people of Buenos Ayres in open sessions, that they might declare their opinion upon an affair of importance to themselves.

Several obstacles being removed, the people met together, in the most solemn manner, on the 12th and 13th of the month (February, 1816); and their sovereign will on the 14th, was thus publicly proclaimed by "*bando*."^{*}

“THE DIRECTOR, AD INTERIM, OF THE STATE.

“Yesterday, the 13th of the present month, I received the communications herewith copied.

‘I have the honour of laying before your Excellency, the annexed certified copy of the Articles agreed to at the meeting of the sovereign people, assembled this day, who are engaged in electing the individuals noticed in Articles 7 and 8, of which

* The “Bando” is the mode of issuing proclamations in Buenos Ayres by a public notary, who, in a loud voice, reads at various corners of the streets the government decree, followed by a company of soldiers, and generally attended by a band.

election I will give to your Excellency due information.

‘God preserve your Excellency many years.

‘MANUEL OLIDEN,

‘President of the people, *pro tempore*.

‘*Church of St. Ignacio.*

‘To the Most Excellent Director of the State.’

Copies of Documents referred to.

“The sovereign people having met in the church of Saint Ignacio, and having called for a president who should take the lead in their affairs, and preserve order, the Governor Intendant was proclaimed such by acclamation.

“Immediately afterwards, the sovereign people proceeded to the election of a president and secretary of their sessions, and they proclaimed by acclamation the governor of the province, as the first, and as the second, Bernardo Velez.

“Hereupon, the proclamation (bando) and the note of the Director of the State, dated yesterday, being read by me, the people were called upon by the president, to make whatever motions they con-

ceived necessary on the present occasion, relative to the object of their assembling. After discussion of the suggestions offered, they agreed to the adoption of the following Articles:—

- “ 1st. The honourable Junta of observation shall not deviate from the resolutions of the present sovereign meeting, till permitted by a new decree to do so.
- “ 2nd. The object of the present public assembly shall be to decide whether the provisional statute shall be adhered to or not.
- “ 3rd. The authorities of the State shall retain the full exercise of their powers, in whatever does not contravene these resolutions, till the reform prescribed be made ; being, however, all subject to such reform.
- “ 4th. That such reform shall be made under the express superintendence and surveillance of the sovereign people.
- “ 5th. That such reform shall be submitted to the consideration of the people at large, eight days before its being adopted.
- “ 6th. That the executive, as such, remain in the exercise of its full faculties.
- “ 7th. Three individuals shall be forthwith nomi-

nated to watch over the personal safety of the citizens, claiming of the executive, in case of infringement in this respect, the exact fulfilment of the law.

“ 8th. That at the same time the election of the Reformation Junta, to consist of five individuals, be proceeded with.

“ 9th. That the inhabitants of rural districts do have an equal right with those of the city, to be present at the sessions of the supreme people.

(Signed) “ **MANUEL LUIS DE OLIVEN,**
Governor, President, and
“ **BERNARDO VELEZ, Secretary.**”

Two remarks offer themselves upon this document: first, that the “supreme people” had become, on paper, the supreme governor; and secondly, that though their power was in fact a nullity, yet, that popular councils and popular influence were in process of incorporation with the executive power, and to a certain extent, modifying and controlling it. This, however, is only in accordance with the general rules and progress of political emancipation in all countries.

We had sometimes to lament that the Govern-

ment of Buenos Ayres not only fell into somewhat hostile contact with the people, but now and then came into collision with our naval commanders; in illustration of which we shall here transcribe an official document addressed by Don Antonio Luis de Beruti, to Captain Fabian, of His Majesty's ship *Orpheus*. This officer had by no means contrived to render himself popular with the executive.

"WAR DEPARTMENT.

"*Buenos Ayres, 2d March, 1816.*

"To the Captain of the Frigate of His Britannic Majesty, the *Orpheus*, Captain Fabian.

"SIR,—After the protest of the Most Excellent Director against you, for the infringement of the constant neutrality observed by the commanders of His Britannic Majesty's naval forces, in this river, the asylum afforded on board of your frigate to captain Don Francisco Roguera, a prisoner, taken clandestinely from shore, by an officer of your ship, must be considered a violation of the adopted line of conduct. Not only so, but you have protected your officer, after having given a solemn pledge to make an example of him, by sending him at the earliest moment to England, for having infringed your own positive orders.

“ His Excellency has received fresh proofs of your heedlessness of this pledge, and of the disregard in which you hold your own honour. Not only have you failed to send home your officer, but you have kept him in his original rank and station, to the manifest disregard of the first authority of the State.”

So the Director proceeds, adducing various charges of a similar kind against Captain Fabian; among others, those of illegally harbouring and protecting Colonels Rios y Cuesta, Friarte, and Corquara; of inferior rank, Ortiz, Ladislao Martinez, and finally, William P. White.*

It is unnecessary, for it would be tiresome, to follow out the remonstrances and allegations of his Excellency, especially as they are all upon such brief and passing occurrences as affect not the history of the times, and as they are adorned with an inflated language, which belongs not to a “ plain unvarnished tale ” of domestic incidents.

As a proof of the injustice done, and the reparation which was made to the estimable and erudite

* So soon had the services of this last in the capture of Monte Video been forgotten by the fickle Buenos Ayreans, that he was now obliged to seek for personal safety in flight.

brother of the deceased patriot, Don Manuel de Moreno, now Minister Plenipotentiary at this Court, we shall transcribe the following decree of the Government of Buenos Ayres, dated 5th March, 1816 :—

“ As there has been no proof adduced against Don Manuel de Moreno, either as a factionary, or otherwise, I declare him innocent, and in the full exercise of his functions of chief officer of the Secretary of State, in the Government Department, &c., &c.”

A more strict act of mere justice could not have been performed ; for Mr. Moreno is as upright, amiable, modest, yet talented a man, as ever, in the quality of ambassador, graced our Court.

On the 27th of March, 1816, the people again assembled, conformably with their own previous resolution of the 13th of February, in the church of San Ignacio, to deliberate upon the affairs of the State. In Santa Fé, a popular movement took place, which had for its object a system of absolute equality ; but it was put down by the bayonets of General Viamont, a blunt and honest soldier, but a great disciplinarian, who had long ruled the inhabitants rather despotically, and who, accus-

tomed to rigid military subordination, was anything but a forbearing sub-delegate from the metropolis.

On the 3rd of April, the sessions of the people, before so much applauded, were prohibited. Ever vacillating were the decrees of the Government of Buenos Ayres, because never based upon principles truly sound, nor considered with reference to their practical working. Decrees, splendid in theory, but turning, in practice, to a nullity, were daily issued, not so much with a view to their permanent effect, as to work out the purposes (some of them short-sighted enough) of the men in possession of present power.

On the 6th of April, the Director ad interim of Buenos Ayres, received from Tucuman a despatch, of which he gives the following official notice, in a supplement to the Buenos Ayres Gazette of the above date:—

“ Official communication has been received from the Governor of the province of Tucuman, in which he informs his Excellency of the inauguration of the Sovereign National Congress on the 25th of March last,*

* It is necessary here to mention that Tucuman, as a central point, was selected for the assembling of a great national congress; which held, accordingly, its first session on the 24th of April, 1816.

an event, he says, which will be celebrated by public festivities and rejoicings."

Some advantages were obtained, at this time, by Belgrano, on the banks of the Paraná, and Rondeau, by his skilful application of emollients, healed some bitter sores that were breaking out in the army of Peru. Viamont's government of Santa Fé gave such general umbrage, that he was shut up there, almost as a prisoner, and only relieved by reinforcements from Buenos Ayres. This was one of many cases, in which the military chiefs of Buenos Ayres were coerced, either by popular opinion or by Government orders, to "pull in their horns." And thus the march of public opinion, in spite of all obstacles, gradually but surely made its way. It is edifying to look into these things, and to consider what a tendency there is in the mind of man to better his condition. The statesman who overlooks this, or will not yield to it, is sure in the end to be trodden down by the giant force of public opinion. It is in vain to expect from the people, as they

It was, however, an ephemeral affair, and produced nothing but discord, nor anything in legislation but squabbling and delay. The style of address to this assembly was that of "Soberano Señor," (Sovereign Lord.)

increase in numbers, and grow in wealth, that they should look passively on, with hope deferred, for prospective amelioration.

The Sovereign Congress, that is to say, a body of legislative nullity, was now established at Tucuman ; and, like the Pope, issued its ineffectual political bulls to all the country round. The provinces laughed at their decrees ; none obeyed them. Only think, here was a Congress established seven hundred miles from Buenos Ayres, without the command of the sinews of war, without resources in itself, absolutely without the power of enforcing its decrees, yet attempting to dictate to the whole provinces of the River Plate ; a thing at once impracticable and absurd.

This Congress, moreover, assumed not only the supreme legislative power, but the executive, as will be seen by the following decree :—

“ The Sovereign Congress, taking into consideration its august installation, grants a general pardon to all criminals confined in the different prisons, &c. Let the Executive Government be informed of this decree, and act accordingly.”

If this be not the legislative lording it over the executive, we know not what is ; and yet this was

only one of many decrees, issued in the same spirit, and on the same principles, by the Congress of Tucuman.

We feel convinced that we shall not offend the better classes of South Americans, by thus upholding to them their early aberrations. Quite the contrary; we believe they now not only laugh at them, but sincerely desire to abolish them. But public reform, like personal reform, whether in South America or in England, is rather uphill work.

* * * “Facilis descensus averni;
Noctes atque dies patit janua ditis:
Sed revocare gradum, superasque evadere ad auras,
Hoc opus, hic labor est.”

On the 11th of May, 1816, we find, from the Buenos Ayres Gazette of that date, the Spanish Minister at Washington, with whom the senior writer was well acquainted, not only fulminating his wrath against the South Americans, (pirates, rebels, and insurgents, as he calls them,) but insisting upon the Government of the United States prohibiting the admission into the ports of North America, of the flags of Carthagena, Mexico, and Buenos Ayres.

Mr. Madison refused to accede to so unreasonable a requirement; and the Spanish Minister, in great dudgeon, mounted his high horse, and took his departure from Washington.

On the 17th of May, the Sovereign Congress of Tucuman elected Colonel Pueyrredon Supreme Director of the State, superseding thus the actual Director's temporary appointment.

Yours, &c.,

THE AUTHORS.

LETTER XL.

THE AUTHORS TO GENERAL MILLER.

Admiral Brown goes to the Pacific—Discontent of Artigas—General Balcarce displaced—Declaration of Independence—Pueyrredon elected Supreme Director—Affair of Azurduy—Pueyrredon—Interference of the Portuguese—General San Martin continues his preparations for crossing the Andes.

London, 1842.

AFTER the fall of Monte Video, the indefatigable and restless Brown, finding that his services were not further required in the River Plate, determined, with the approbation of the Government, to fit out a small squadron of privateers, and try his fortune in the Pacific. He got round there, kept the coast in alarm, made many prizes, took some prisoners of distinction, and sailing as far north as Guayaquil, he suddenly attacked the town, and threw it into the utmost consternation. Leaving his own ship, for the purpose of being able to enter the river, he took the command of a brig, and bombarded the shipping and town from it. In his ardour, however, he forgot the tides; his

brig got aground; became useless, was taken, and he himself, and his crew made prisoners. Fortunately, he possessed in vessels and in captives of rank, ample means for an exchange; and, accordingly, after some negotiation, he and his men were rescued from their dilemma, by his giving up two vessels, and some of the principal Spaniards whom he had taken. He remained for some time on the coast, and ultimately returned to Buenos Ayres.

The discontent of Artigas, arising from the interference by Buenos Ayres in the affairs of the Banda Oriental, though suffocated for a season, was by no means extinguished. Indeed his success and popularity in the provinces were so decided, that at length, on acceding to a treaty proposed by the Director Balcarce, he found himself in a position to dictate his own terms to the Porteños.

The Gaucho chief insisted, in the first place, that the Buenos Ayres troops, quartered in the Rosario, should fall back on San Nicolas, both towns being on the west bank of the Paraná, but only the latter within the province of Buenos Ayres. This preliminary condition being readily complied with, matters were "made up" between

the belligerents; the capital, as the weaker of the two parties, conceding everything to Artigas. Thus Buenos Ayres began to fall before the united wishes and influence of the provinces, which she had unsuccessfully tried to bring under her own subjection and control.

On the 11th of July, General Antonio Gonzalez Balcarce was displaced by an unworthy intrigue from his temporary directorship; and we notice this instance of the fickleness of the South American Athens to record the probity, patriotism, and ability of the man who was denounced as incapable of holding his situation as first magistrate of the province. The integrity of his character soon redeemed him from momentary unmerited disgrace; and when he died at an early stage of the revolution, his name was with justice consecrated in the hearts of the people, as a disinterested lover of his country. But it seems to be an inherent sin in the constitution of democracy, that no public man's character is safe for a week together. A republican is enamoured of abstract justice and theoretical equality; but he is often woefully at issue with himself when his opinions are brought to a practical test.

act, binding themselves through as, to the fulfilment and upholding of this their will, under the security and guarantee of their lives, property, and fame. In publishing this decree, let a manifesto be drawn up and published, in token of respect for the nations at large, setting forth the grave causes which have impelled us to this declaration.'"

Many respectable names were appended to this document; those, indeed, of every one of the representatives. The mask of holding the country for Ferdinand was in this manner laid aside by the representatives of the people; and the event has shown that they ran no risk in so doing.

The Congress next proceeded to the election of a Supreme Director of the State, and the choice, as already stated, fell on Colonel Juan Martin de Pueyrredon, who has already been honourably mentioned in his military capacity. In his magisterial one, we fear, we shall have to speak of him in less laudatory terms.

The first despatch addressed to Pueyrredon, as Supreme Director, is a curious one. It is from the Commander-in-chief of the Peruvian army, General Belgrano, who commences thus:—

"I send to your Excellency a design of the

colours which the amazon, (this is a figure of speech, intended for a compliment,) Doña Juana Azurduy, took on the rugged hills of La Plata, eleven leagues to the east of Chuquisaca, in the action which is detailed by the Commandant Padilla, who, from modesty, does not ascribe the glory to the said lady, his wife, although I know to a certainty that she herself wrested the flag from the ensign-bearer, with a dauntless courage, very uncommon in her sex." Then comes the detail of Azurduy, a very interesting one, as pourtraying the guerilla warfare which was carried on, in the course of which he says, that in dividing her force into small parties, he placed his wife in Villar, with thirty fusileers and two hundred men of all arms. The desultory engagement lasted from nine in the morning till six in the evening; "and as the intention of the enemy," says Padilla, in one part of his despatch, "was to cut off my rear-guard, he threw himself upon Villar, where my wife, making a bold sally, repelled him completely, with the loss on his part of fifteen men killed." Padilla concludes by saying, he holds the splendid ensign itself, at the disposal of Belgrano.

On the 29th of July, Pueyrredon made his public entry into Buenos Ayres, as Supreme

Director, and in September, the Porteños celebrated with great pomp and rejoicing the oaths of allegiance taken in virtue of the declaration made by Congress, of the absolute independence of the country.

Towards the close of this year we find that the Portuguese, that is, the Brazilians, were once more intent on occupying the Banda Oriental. Brazilian vessels of war took up their station at Maldonado, while a land force under General Lecor, quietly advanced upon that point. Naturally jealous of these movements, the Government of Buenos Ayres sent in the first place an envoy to Lecor, to demand explanations, at the same time, that it resolved to adopt other means of meeting the aggression ; and Pueyrredon made an appeal to Artigas, "the chief of the Orientales," to co-operate in repelling the enemy.

This warmth, however, on the part of Buenos Ayres soon cooled down ; for Monte Video refusing afterwards to adhere to the Supreme Government, as elected by the Congress, the Director determined to leave Artigas to deal himself with the Brazilians as he best could.

It was resolved at this same time "to extend hostilities by sea and by land, in order to make

more palpable to King Ferdinand the prejudice he had already suffered ;" and, accordingly, *letters of marque* were offered to all adventurers, many of whom soon after started up to claim the privilege of this licensed sea plunder; a species of piracy authorized by international law indeed, but one which forms an indelible disgrace to those civilized nations which have had recourse to it.

Before the end of the year, and ere Pueyrredon had been five months Supreme Director of the State, we find him waging open war with the federal party in Buenos Ayres. A violent decree of expatriation was issued against Colonel Manuel Dorrego, a most extraordinary man, who, at a future period, became for himself too fatally celebrated as a leading public character; and this arbitrary act of the Government was the prelude to others of a similar character, and still more unwarrantable in their application. The surveillance of the police became more close and severe; foreigners of every class were included in their odious and inquisitorial regulations; and, in short, everything betokened a coming severity in the rule of the new military supreme head of the republic.

On the other hand, General San Martin, with a noble disregard of the petty workings of intrigues

and party spirit at the seat of Government, was at Mendoza, unobtrusively, but with system and energy, bringing to a happy conclusion all his preliminary operations for his great project of the invasion of Chile. He received little or no assistance from Buenos Ayres; we might almost say, he was neglected by Pueyrredon; but he was nobly seconded in his arduous undertaking by the provinces of Cuyo, particularly by Mendoza, as he himself gratefully sets forth in one of his despatches;* and it must be confessed, that his eulogy of the poor Mendozinos is a strong though indirect condemnation of the capital, hitherto so prodigal of its resources, in aid of the great cause of the revolution.

Your's, &c.,

THE AUTHORS.

P.S. We have given you so much historical detail without the intermission of any lighter matter, that it may be agreeable both to the writers and their readers here to make a pause. We purpose to carry our historical review in these volumes down to the end of 1819; and the last three years will form the concluding portion of our third volume.

* See Appendix.

LETTER XLI.

THE AUTHORS TO GENERAL MILLER.

Statistical Account of Buenos Ayres—Its Extent and Boundaries—The Grecian Republics—Origin of the name of the River Plate—The City of Buenos Ayres—Its Trade and Population—Its Debt to England—Trade of Buenos Ayres with other Countries—Singularly advantageous position for Commerce—Introduction of Horned Cattle and Horses—Increase of the Cattle—Shipment of Specie—Particulars of Buenos Ayres Incumbrances—Paper Money—Pampa Indians—Their Mode of Life—Their Meals—Their Traffic—Milk-venders or Lecheros—Their Practices.

London, 1842.

As it appears only reasonable that a short portion of our work should be dedicated to the giving of some statistical account of Buenos Ayres, we now proceed to do so; and for some particulars we shall avail ourselves of a work of accredited authority, by Don Vicente Pazos, published in New York, in 1819.

The republic of the united provinces of South America, comprehends, with some exceptions, the same territory as the viceroyalty of Rio de la Plata, which was established in 1778.

It extends from the 16th to the 45th degree of south latitude; from the left margin of the lake Titicaca, which lies between the two cordilleras of Peru, on the north, and to the coast of Patagonia on the south. It is bounded on the west by the viceroyalty of Peru on the Pacific Ocean, as far as the coast of Atacama, at the 23d degree of south latitude, and by Chili, from which it is separated by the mountains of the Andes. On the east and north, it is bounded by the Atlantic Ocean, by the dominions of Brazil, and by the establishments of the missions of Paraguay, Chiquitos, and by the independent Indians of the river Amazon, and of its borders. The whole forms an extent of territory which stretches over twenty-nine degrees of latitude, embracing every variety of climate, productions, and people. It rises, toward the west, into a lofty and elevated soil of mountains, of which the bases terminate in immense plains, extending to the Atlantic Ocean.

This region, commencing under the tropics of Capricorn, at the foot of the mountains of Jujui, is divided principally into Upper Peru and Rio de la Plata, properly so called. Peru comprehends the provinces of Potosi, Charcas or La Plata,

Cochabamba, La Paz, Santa Cruz de la Sierra or Puno, Moxos, and Chiquitos; and the Rio de la Plata includes Buenos Ayres, Banda Oriental, Entre Ríos, Corrientes, Paraguay, Cordova, Mendoza or Cuyo, Salta, and Tucuman.*

The provinces of the Banda Oriental, Corrientes, Entre Ríos, and Paraguay, have withdrawn from the union, and each has elected its own petty, but yet independent government. The cordiality among any of those separated states is not great; but we question whether it was more cordial among the great, but withal insignificant states of ancient Greece. Thus to speak of Greece may not be classical, but it is certainly true. When we hear the high toned Thucydides making a display of a Grecian navy, that might have been stowed away, men and all, in the hold of one of our seventy-fours, we may surely be allowed, as well as he, to give a little importance to South American history.

The river Plate was so named by Solis, who, in 1515, was the first to enter it. He was followed, some years afterwards, by Sebastian Cabot, who, ascending it above its junction with the Paraná,

* Upper Peru, which formerly constituted part of the provinces of the River Plate, is now the independent republic of BOLIVIA.

found silver ornaments among the natives, and, hence its name of Rio de la Plata, or river of silver. The discoverers of two of the mightiest rivers of the world, Orellana of the Amazon, and Solis of the Plate, though both lost their lives in their arduous pursuit, have failed to obtain even the posthumous honor of having those streams run under the names of their first enterprising navigators. Not so Magellan; for not only does that strait go under his name, but we are told by a Spanish poet, that

“ Magellanes, Señor, fué el primer hombre,
Que pasando por este estrecho, le dio nombre.”

The situation of Buenos Ayres is anything but commanding, and sadly disappoints one after coming off a long voyage, and sailing up so splendid a stream. Standing on the most slightly elevated ridge, a few spires, domes, and large convents alone break in upon the monotony of the scene. The space occupied by the city is immense, almost every house having a court-yard, many two, and some three, by which you enter to the ground-floor apartments. But the buildings, though whitewashed, are monotonous in their architecture,

and till within the last few years, were comfortless inside. The streets intersect each other at right angles, forming regular squares of 150 yards in length on each front; and this uniformity (which is far from pleasing) is only interrupted by two or three squares without the least pretension to architectural beauty, except perhaps the Plaza Mayor, or great square. The number of inhabitants, including from three to four thousand foreigners, is about eighty thousand, and it comprises several castes, varying in colour, from the swarthy negro and mulatto to the fair European, and his pure-blooded descendants.*

The foundation of the city, as compared with the first discovery of the river Plate, may be called recent. It was not till 1580, that Juan de Garay, having passed up the rivers Paraná and Paraguay, returned with a handful of seventy followers, and after many difficulties, and one desperate engagement with the native Querandis, routed, slaughtered them, and, in the name of the King of Spain, laid the foundation of the present

* We have here spoken of what Buenos Ayres was in 1815; and the many improvements which have since taken place in it we shall have to notice at a future time.

city of Buenos Ayres. It has grown in rank, wealth, and importance every year since; and but for the restrictive policy of Spain, (though in the present case a little relaxed,) the capital of the River Plate would have been one of the most important cities of the new world. It is the largest emporium of which we know for hides and tallow; and were its natural advantages developed, the feuds of the country stilled, and the governments at peace with one another, Buenos Ayres would be the natural port of transit to and from most of the provinces on the eastern side of the Andes.

The following statistical accounts may perhaps appear tiresome to some of our readers, but we cannot, for all that, abandon the plan of our work; which is, to give information on Buenos Ayres in particular, and on the provinces of the River Plate generally.

The population of Buenos Ayres has already been stated at about eighty thousand. Their traffic is chiefly in hides and tallow; and the importations are British and other manufactures in return.

Of our exportations, by the official account, as given by Sir Woodbine Parish, in 1837, the

amount was £696,000, and of returns, in 1827, about £750,000. Our returns, we need not say, were never adequate, *on the whole*, to pay for the imports, to say nothing of the losses sustained by our manufacturers and merchants. The whole has ended in that country's being indebted to us, now, including the loan, in at least two millions and a half sterling, or twelve millions of dollars.

Beside her trade with England, from which she receives her useful commodities, Buenos Ayres imports from France great abundance of finery, wine, liqueurs, and other articles. She also trades with China for silks, teas, crapes, nankeens, all which, by an anomaly arising out of our restrictive Navigation Act, were brought for English account in American ships. She has besides a trade with almost every other maritime country in the world for their respective commodities, and for the greater part of which, as has been said, she pays in hides, tallow, wool, horse-hair and skins; but she likewise *used* to pay in specie, before the intercourse with Peru was closed, and got copper from Chili before it was diverted into a channel which brought it direct to Europe. One of the most valuable of her exports will probably, at no distant period, be

wool, to which the attention of both foreigners and natives is now much attracted; while the quality is, in consequence, ameliorating, and the flocks of sheep greatly extending. A few other skins, as those of the chinchilla, nutria, and swan down, are sent to adorn our shops in Regent-street.

The admirable position of Buenos Ayres for commerce bids fair to encourage the hope that she will ere long rise from her comparatively prostrate position, and shaking off her present domestic difficulties, her political strife, and her unwise fiscal regulations, stand forth as one of the first mercantile communities in the late Spanish colonies. Lying on that mighty stream, the River Plate, the rivers Uruguay, Paranà, and Paraguay pour their accumulated waters into it; while from the interior of Peru the tributaries Salado, Vermejo, Pilcomayo, and many other feeders of these rivers, form a navigable entrance to the very sources of the metallic and other wealth of the rich provinces of Peru.

It is generally known that America is indebted to Spain for the small stock out of which her present immense herds,—thousands upon thousands, millions upon millions,—have grown of horses and

horned cattle. In 1535, the Adelantado Mendoza who first landed at Buenos Ayres, took a few horses with him. So great a number died on the voyage, that authors are not quite agreed whether his whole cavalry were mounted on twelve, fifteen, or twenty horses.

Garay, on the other hand, introduced into Paraguay the first horned cattle seen in the Pampas. Yet when the senior writer, in 1809, first landed at Buenos Ayres, and went to the barracas or hide warehouses, on the banks of the Riachuelo, about three miles from Buenos Ayres, large as the galpones were, not only was there not space for the produce, but the hides they could not contain were stowed in immense heaps in the spacious courts and corridors, covered with the same material outside, in order to keep them from the inclemency of the weather. It was computed that three million of hides were stowed away in those barracas, beside horse skins, hair, and tallow, all packed in hides.

At Monte Video it was nearly the same, but not exactly to the same extent, while the country, on both sides of the River Plate, seemed as if groaning under the immense pressure of the teeming multitude of quadrupeds.

At the time of which we speek, a bullock's hide was worth in Buenos Ayres four shillings.

The port had been blockaded by the English, who were at war with Spain, while the viceroy would admit no English vessels within, except by stealth, and for a heavy remuneration: hence the stagnation of trade and the prodigious accumulation of property, of which we speak.

Beside this, the English ships-of-war were continually carrying off large sums in dollars, all smuggled; and we had a consul there, already mentioned, stationed for the purpose chiefly of drawing bills for the precious metals, for the supply of our troops in the Peninsula, at an exchange of 5s., sometimes 5s. 6d.

The paper representative of the dollar may now be had in Buenos Ayres at the rate of 3d., showing a depreciation of 4s. 9d. in every 5s., or 5s. 3d., according to the higher rate of exchange.

Of the revenue of Buenos Ayres it is impossible, even with any approximation, to speak, so diminished is it in reality but so expanded by paper issues.

Taking it, however, to have ranged, from one source or other, at about two millions and a half of

Spanish dollars, at 4*s.* per dollar, that would be equal, after all, to only the small sum of 500,000*l.*; and this we believe may be a pretty correct estimate of its current expenses. But its revenue having, from many causes, fallen off, Buenos Ayres has had recourse to loans and an interminable issue of paper money; so that we believe we shall not be far from the mark if we estimate her present local and foreign incumbrances at 2,500,000*l.* And expand this into paper notes, at 3*d.* each, which, though a legal, is yet a compulsory medium of exchange, we shall have incumbrances to the amount of 200,000,000 of paper dollars.

There is no hope for Buenos Ayres, financially speaking, but in her lands and cattle; and even then, her creditors must be content to make a liberal composition with her many years hence.

But enough of statistics, policy, and finance, especially after what has been told in preceding letters.

There is in the general mass a class of men, of whom the habits are so peculiar, that we are tempted here to give some account of them. These are the Pampa Indians, an erratic but on the whole a peaceful tribe, whose general alliance with the natives of Buenos Ayres is not much

interrupted. Among themselves, they are often implacable; and wandering on horseback over the Pampas, in small parties of forty or fifty, with their wives and children, they not unfrequently couch lances with their enemies. They are exceedingly fond of stealing whatever comes in their way in the open plain, and when they can do it with impunity, they attack the huts of the estancieros, take the most valuable part of the property, and as many cattle as, compatibly with safety, convenience, and speed, they can carry off. They then bivouack under hides or mats for a season, and when they think that the affray has been forgotten or overlooked, they quietly saddle their horses, come in to Buenos Ayres, and pay a visit to the Director, headed by their cacique, he wearing a tawdry uniform coat, a sword, and cast off cocked hat, of all which he is very proud, especially as they have been made him a present of by the Director. He then harangues the supreme chief of the state, receives from him a few dollars for himself and cavalcade, and hies him back to his bivouack in the purlieus of the city. This offers as good a picture of savage life as I ever saw. You might fancy yourself in the Pampas.

See assembled in a large yard, not unlike the

knacker's, the tattered and half naked Indians of the Pampas; two mares which they have just killed for dinner they are cutting up with more avidity than precision. They live almost entirely on mare's flesh, a dainty which they prefer to all others. Now comes the maté, the cigar, and best of all, the raw spirits, which they never leave till finished. They then wrap themselves in their ponchos, each with his better half, if he have one, round a blazing fire in winter, and in summer under the light of the moon. But the Pampa's business is not yet finished.

The man in whose yard they live is (or was, for I know not if he be now living) an old established agent of the Pampa Indians, and bought from them their wares. These consisted in plaited—beautifully plaited—reins for bridles, head-pieces for horses, skins of various sorts, horse girths of various colours, lasos, bolas, covers for saddles, and many other articles, but mostly all of horse gear. The Pampa Indians received in return from their agent or patron, as they called him, their ponchos, knives, tobacco, a little white cloth, and a supply of spirits; then off they marched in battle array to their favourite haunts. They knew nothing of agri-

culture, being strictly erratic, and not being under the necessity of looking either for game or fish.

Another remarkable race is a set of urchins who vend milk through the streets, and who are called lecheros. They come in mounted on nags, sorry enough, with each from two to four, sometimes six, round earthen jars slung across their horses. These mischievous, cheating, and knowing little rogues gallop from different parts of the country a distance of six or eight miles, their earthen jars dodging, and their rough rowelled spurs goading on their hacks ; for each milk-vender, anxious to be first in the market, is inspired with the project of getting his horse into the city before his neighbour.

Their dress is the most tattered imaginable ; for though they water their milk unconscionably, and even then do not pay their master what it fetched, they gamble for silver as soon as they get out of town, run furious races, and then go home saying they could not get their milk sold till a late hour of the day.

Yours, &c.

THE AUTHORS.

LETTER XLII.

J. P. R. to GENERAL MILLER.

Friendship between the English and South Americans—Urbanity and Politeness of the Natives—Contrast between English and Buenos Ayres Society—The Barquins and Oromis—Tertulias—Manners and Friendship of the Portefíos—Doctor Gafarót, the Catalan Physician—Don Felipe in the Dance—The Promenade.

London, 1842.

THERE are few places in the world where there has always been such a frank intercourse between the people of the country and foreigners at large, but more especially Englishmen, as at Buenos Ayres, since it became the capital of an independent state. Differing in language, in religion, in habits, customs, education, there has always been some magic influence exercised over the minds of both parties, which has obliterated those strong distinctive features which often draw an almost insuperable barrier between two nations, bringing the South Americans and English into as close a contact as if they belonged to one and the same family.

By high and low, rich and poor, the English have

been invariably well treated and received, even in the midst of many vagaries, peculiarities, and aberrations which to the South Americans must have appeared, to say the least of it, extravagant.

I dare say the wealth of foreigners has had something to do in forming the connexion; but still I incline to trace it on the whole, to the urbanity and politeness of the people. They are patient of the faults of others, far from obtrusive themselves; their welcome, if they extend it to you, is generally sincere and consistent; no made up manners, no affectation, no sneers at inferiors, no flattery except as a sarcasm to those who affect airs, or as a joke, when they recognize in inferiors or equals, good nature and a forbearing spirit. A young lady will dance, it cannot be supposed with the same liking, but certainly with the same apparent and ready cordiality with an old or an awkward man as she would with a young and elegant one. They never allow even a fool to look sheepish; for they will talk to him and appear to do so with interest, and the driest sticks I ever knew I have seen bent into elastic twigs, before the bland influence of the Porteñas. I very much wish I could say the same of many of our

European fair, whose pleasure seems often the greater the more they can overwhelm a bashful or awkward man by the not enviable exercise of their beauty, their wit, (fancied in too many cases,) or their raillery, never so unbecoming as in the mouth of a lady. Like sparkling champagne, it looks very fine when the cork is first drawn; but in a short time it gets flat, and people then don't like the draught.

By way of illustration of the facility of admission to the best society in Buenos Ayres, I shall shortly describe how I became acquainted, and indeed intimate, with one or two of the first families of the place.

Soon after my arrival in Buenos Ayres, of which some account will be found in the preceding letter, on a lugubrious and cheerless winter night, when the atmosphere was impregnated with mist, and the badly-paved streets were overlaid with mud, I passed a conspicuous mansion. Just as I was at the threshold of the heavy folding gateway a negro, having in his hand an uplifted knife, rushed out infuriated after a brother servant. Before I could interpose, the flying servant was stabbed in the back, and the pursuer had fled.

Down came the brawny negro to the ground ; and as I attempted to raise him, and gave the alarm, out came three gentlemen, with candles in their hands, and as many fine women. They were all anxiety to know the cause of the affray ; and having satisfied them, as far as I could, on this subject, I was invited into the drawing-room, redolent of coffee and pastilles.

Fortunately one of the visitants was a celebrated Catalàn surgeon, of the name of Gafarót. Stiff, learned, demure, but withal perfectly polite, he pronounced the negro's wound to be superficial ; and, by the aid of his surgical case, having dressed it, he came into the drawing-room as if nothing had happened. I admired his clean chin, his white starched cravat, his Hessian boots, his formal demeanour, and his gold-headed cane. He was the beau-ideal of an accomplished surgeon, and, though his Catalàn accent grated a little upon a classical ear, while his stiff manners bade defiance to good taste, he was, on the whole,—if not to the ladies, at least to the gentlemen,—a desirable sort of man. The latter all laughed at him, and none of them were ever jealous of him ; for his rivals got the ladies to laugh at him too.

Well, Monsieur de Gafarót, pronounced the negro out of danger, as he walked in with his tasseled boots, and pulled up his neckerchief with no ordinary satisfaction.

Monsieur de Gafarót thought he could dance : he was rather mistaken ; for, beside that he had no ear, he was knock-kneed, and awkwardly stiff in gesture and demeanour. But his claims to notice were just in proportion to his want of legitimate pretension to any. His whims and oddities rendered him agreeable society, and a somewhat remarkable character.

In conformity with the usage of those of his profession, el Señor de Gafarót used a yellow cane, with a great profusion of black borla, or tassel. He had a golden-framed eye-glass ; was particularly sensitive as to the cut of his coat ; and he walked about in society, if not the admiration of others, yet completely pleased with himself. I am not sure that there is any greater gratification than this in the world ; and el Señor Gafarót was a striking exemplification of it.

But to return to my unexpected visit. By a lady beautifully “en bon point,” I was asked to walk into the drawing-room ; and *there*, what a treat

I experienced. One sylph followed another, with each a candle in her hand, serving to show, in pleasing contrast with its dim flare, the flushed features of the agitated frame that had been spectator of the tragedy enacted in the lobby or vestibule of the house. I was at the time not twenty years of age, *rather* susceptible ; and as the compliments from the honeyed lips of my female friends poured in upon me for my philanthropy, I waxed *rather* vain. In half an hour we became quite on easy terms ; and in half a dozen days I became a domesticated inmate of the house.

A more interesting or attractive family circle I never knew. There was Mrs. Barquin, an old dame full, in a nice old fashioned lady-like way, of wise saws and modern instances about her magnificent lime pits on the Uruguay ; there was her pale and interesting daughter, just married to Captain Cerviño ; herself, like her husband, all thought, speculation, and reflection. Cerviño, one of the most accomplished scholars of Spain, was a captain of the navy, (Capitan de Navio or full colonel,) and had been sent out to make a survey, which he successfully accomplished, of the provinces of the River Plate ; there was Doña Mer-

ceditas, one of the most engaging of the Buenos Ayres belles ; and there was her inseparable friend Doña Mariquita Oromi, the most elegant woman of her own circle. Then we had the father and mother of this fascinating creature ; the one a finished gentleman on the staff of the Viceroy, the other a pattern of a lady. Mrs. Barquin had taken the greatest pains in bringing up her daughters : they all lived under one roof ; and the Oromis were constant attendants at their evening tertulias.

Who could be otherwise than charmed with such a circle ? I was spell-bound within it ; and receiving, on the simple score of my interference between the two negroes, a sincere invitation to consider the house my own, I became thenceforward one of its favoured inmates. I went to breakfast, to dine, to take coffee, to sup, to laugh, to chat, just *as* I pleased, and *when* I pleased. Doña Mariquita and Doña Merceditas became my favourites, till one was taken away in marriage by the handsome Don Jaime Nadal, and the other was betrothed to a handsome Chileno. I envied *both* lovers, and wished myself in the shoes of either.

My friend Don Felipe Parkin, whom I introduced to the Barquins, became a frequent guest at their Tertulias; and an amusing subject he was. His dancing was not of the best; in his Spanish he not only had no copia verborum, but he set both grammar and pronunciation at defiance. His wit was the very reverse of bright. But then his good nature was unbounded; and, having a very good opinion of himself, he took it as a matter of course that every one saw him in the same mirror which vanity (sad deceiver!) held up to him. Don Felipe's, however, was anything but an extraordinary case, for I believe we are *all* very much inclined to pride ourselves most, not on our strongest but on our weakest points.

Through the family of the Barquins I became acquainted with many of the best families of Buenos Ayres. They were in the highest society there; for, though old Spaniards by connexion, education, and feeling, they had too much good sense to dissolve their acquaintance with those who went with the new order of things.

There has always been something very striking to Englishmen in the elegance of the *dancing* of Porteña women. They adopt a *quiet* style, but

full of elaborate and beautiful figuring, and this gives very great scope to their showing off in perfection the general symmetry of their forms, as well as the graceful and easy way in which they carry them.

Their small feet and beautifully-turned ankles, dressed at all times in satin shoes and silk stockings, came peering from under their dresses, and were a conspicuous part of the *tout ensemble* of their appearance. There is nothing about which the Porteña ladies are more scrupulous and careful than the dress of their feet and ankles. Even the female slaves do not consider themselves properly attired unless they can vie, in this respect, though at a little distance, with their "*ámas*" or mistresses ; and not the least conspicuous part of a Porteña's retinue is the one or more domestics, gaudily dressed, with their fans in hand, ready for flirtation with their negro beaux, the gaily-coloured mantle, the large comb in their bushy hair, and the rich carpet, on which their ladies, and often themselves, are to be seated at church. The Portenás walk better than they ride ; nor have they yet consented to lay aside, when on horseback, the straw bonnet. The appearance of it thus worn

(and the Porteñas only wear it when mounted on a prancing palfrey) jars upon an Englishman's associations, accustomed as he is to the nice riding-habit, the small hat, and the green veil of his own countrywomen.

Yours, &c.,

J. P. R.

LETTER XLIII.

THE AUTHORS TO GENERAL MILLER.

Climate of Buenos Ayres—More Modified by Winds than by the Sun—North Wind—Pampero, or South Wind—Summer and Winter Seasons—Slavery—Carts and Carters—Landing in a Cart—Water Carts—Tanks—Mode of Fishing—Beggars on Horseback—Bull Fights—Minutely described—Their Abolition.

London, 1842.

A FEW more last words before we close this our second volume on Buenos Ayres; and first as to the climate, that important source to man of comfort or the reverse. Changeable as the climate of Buenos Ayres is, now by the heat raising the thermometer to 90° in the shade, and now by the cold lowering it to 35° and 40°;* yet on the whole, as the very name of the city, "*Buenos Ayres*," "Fine Air," indicates the climate is most salubrious. As in many other parts of South America, the atmosphere is more influenced by local causes than by the proximity of the sun. These local causes in

* In summer the thermometer, for a day or two, has stood at 93° and 94°, and in winter it has fallen to 32°, the freezing point. But the *mean* temperature may be 76° in summer and 50° in winter.

Buenos Ayres are the *winds*. If the south-wester blow strong in the heat of summer, it changes in a moment the heat of summer to the cold of winter ; and neither absence of the sun, nor of shade, nor not of the shades of night, can render the heat tolerable during the pestilential sway, with moisture on his wings, of the north.

The south wind dries everything, the north wind covers everything with mould, moisture, and rust. In summer it ushers in lassitude, disease, difficulty of respiration ; it brings myriads of mosquitos and other insects in its train ; it turns meat and vegetables to putridity ; fish cannot be kept in the market-place for more than two or three hours ; fruit grows stale and flowers fade before it.

But ever as the north begins thus to abuse his power, and to fancy himself omnipotent, down like a thunderbolt comes upon him the pampero or south.

Ushering himself in with portentous clouds and rolling thunder, he commences his struggle by spitting forth large globules of rain, sometimes pellets of hail : presently he comes roaring through the streets himself, involving the atmosphere and the inhabitants in darkness by the dense whirlwinds of dust which he raises as he rushes along.

Flap go the doors and windows of the houses, covered is everything with dust, of which many are obliged to make a reluctant meal during the process of shutting up. But this seldom lasts more than a quarter of an hour. The pampero then opens the windows of heaven, drives before him in precipitate flight his adversary the north, lays the dust, sweeps away all pestilential deposits, and you awake in the morning, after a delightful night's repose, to all the luxury of an atmosphere, not only cooled, but clarified, and of a bright blue sky, with only here and there a beautiful flake of silvery and transparent cloud, dancing and sweeping along the highest regions, to all appearance, of our vaulted canopy. There is a distinct winter season in Buenos Ayres, which, commencing in April, ends in September ; and then all the warmth and comfort of an English fire-side are as delightful as here in December. Fire-places are now in almost universal use ; and where, as in the country, you cannot get coal fuel, you have a cheerful and delightful substitute in the peach tree, especially when you can get into old woods and dig up old roots. There is also a distinct summer, from the beginning of October to the end of March ;

and then, for fires, name them not ; but take your bath, come home for the day at eleven o'clock, make everything as dark about you as possible, dine early and drink claret, take a siesta, ride out in the evening, or walk in the Alameda with the ladies, smoke your cigar on the Azotea, or in the Pateo, take, if you like, a little weak brandy and water, and go to bed with a thin single sheet over you, and a mosquito netting ; and be sure to leave your doors and windows open.

In Buenos Ayres, before the revolution, slavery was in full operation, all domestic offices, those of agriculture, and many others, being performed by Africans, chiefly imported from Brazil. The Spaniards are generally kind to their slaves ; but, notwithstanding this, the Government, thinking a state of partial slavery incompatible with one of general freedom, abolished it, in a very judicious, because gradual, manner, and on principles of justice, because it did not overlook the interest of the slave-holder nor his fair claims to consideration.

Nothing strikes one more on a first arrival in Buenos Ayres than the carts and carters. The former are vehicles with large wooden axles, and

most enormous wheels, so high that the spokes are about eight feet in diameter, towering above both horses and driver; he rides one of the animals. There are four thick pieces of wood nailed together, forming a parallelogram, over the axle, and to this parallelogram are fixed bamboo canes, both under the bottom and at the sides, thus constituting the cart. The apertures of the horizontal *flooring* of the vehicle are quite perceptible, and so made as to allow the water to drain through them. The upright canes are at considerable distances from each other, and serve either to keep the hides in the cart, or to afford a hold to the passenger. The first sight you have of these clumsy vehicles is on your landing. They drive off like so many bathing-machines to your hotel, a dozen carters, just like a dozen porters here, struggling in rude contention for the preference in carrying ashore passengers and their luggage. Both you and your luggage, as the cart now staggers over Tosca rocks, and anon plunges into large holes, are sure to be thoroughly drenched; for, in spite of all your efforts, the splash and spray of the river comes up through the cane flooring, and lays *at least* your shoes, stockings, and trousers under watery contrib-

bution. You often forget the precautions that *might* be taken to save your nether parure by the frightful jolts you get, and the fear every moment of being upset. One is naturally tempted to offer up a prayer of thanksgiving when he reaches the shore ; yet the dexterity with which the carters manage their vehicles is wonderful. Their two horses are fastened to the short pole only by leather thongs plaited, and these are run through the girth of the horse and there made fast. With this rude and simple apparatus the Buenos Ayres cartman does wonders in the way of backing, siding in, taking up a straitened position, and jostling his way (as at the Custom-house) through dense double and treble rows of his competitors. The equality is so great that the struggle is often much prolonged.

Another species of cart is the *water-cart*, drawn by two bullocks, yoked together by the horns. On this yoke the waterman sits, and, with a short stick in the one hand and a short goad in the other, he drives his patient but lazy cattle from house to house, selling barrels of the hot and muddy water just drawn from the Plate. In this state the water is abominable ; but let it stand for a couple of days in a cool place, in an evaporating earthen jar,

and *settle*, and you drink, if you are a water-drinker, the most delicious and appetite-giving beverage imaginable.

Most of the principal families have large and deep *tanks*, coated inside by capital brick and lime work, in their patios, which receive through spouts and pipes all the rain that falls on the flat roofs of the houses. It comes out clear as crystal, cool as ice, and is a great treat in the heat of the day, mixed with a little white wine.

The mode of fishing in Buenos Ayres is curious. Immense nets are laid down at low water on the sand ; when the tide comes in, millions of fine fish swim along with it to look for food on the shoals of the river near the beach ; three or four men then ride out on horseback to the nets ; before they can reach them the horse is often swimming with his master on his back. The *hawl* is made, and the net is brought toward the shore, sweeping into its subtle bosom all that comes in its way, from the pacu or turbot, pexerey and gold fish, to the minutest minnow of the deep. As they near the shore, the fishermen feel the prodigious weight of their *take*, and, unable to cope with it in their swimming position, the moment their horses find a

footing their masters stand up upon their backs like so many riders at Astley's. Having now an additional purchase, they drag the finny tribe to the shore, empty them out of the net bag, till the whole beach being strewed with the inhabitants of the deep, they set up a motley dance, frisking, jumping, whirling, panting, and, as it seems, calling for water, till, none being brought them, they one by one grow faint, pant, lie down, and die on the site of their short-lived revelry. The fishermen pick out the best of them, hang them up in their large straw waggons, and leaving thousands behind, which they think it not worth while to pick up, hasten to the market-place, fearing that their slain may turn to putridity before they arrive there, especially if the season be summer and the wind from the north.

A stranger would think that where beef was to be had for next to nothing, and fish for the trouble of picking it up, there could not be many beggars. He would be mistaken. In Buenos Ayres there are plenty of beggars, but then they beg in style. They almost all *ride*; so that although the adage affirms that if you set a beggar on horseback he will ride to a personage much to

be avoided, it is to be hoped this proverb does not hold good in the new world.

The beggar, or Pordiosero, of Buenos Ayres, likes not only the necessities of life, but the comforts of it, sometimes the luxuries. Mounted on his steed, with a wallet behind him, and a candle box of hide, he goes from house to house, soliciting an alms, "por el amor de Dios." He thence finds his way to the market place, and, "por el amor de Dios," gets beef, mutton, bacon, vegetables, fish, fruit, and a brace or two of partridges. He then goes home for the day, sets his nag to eat some alfalfa (trefoil), and returning to his cabin, sits down to cook his dinner, and enjoy himself, saying it is too hot to go out any more till after siesta time. Your Pordiosero thinks nothing of riding into the front quadrangle of a mansion, and there waiting till he is served.

There was in Buenos Ayres, when the senior writer first went there, and for some time afterwards, a spacious amphitheatre for the exhibition of bull-fights. Gaudily painted and adorned, this place was capable of holding 12,000 persons, and was called the Plaza de Toros, or Retiro.

The bull-fight day, which recurred in summer

once a week, was one of jubilee for the whole city. Shops were shut, the people breathing anxiety, and the ladies decked out in the gaudiest attire, were either hastening in animated groups, with the gentlemen, to the place of action, or seated in their state bedrooms which looked to the street, and were conspicuously displayed to the view of all who passed. Surrounded by many domestics finely dressed, the Porteñas were looking at the company as it passed, criticising the dress of one, the gait of another, and admiring themselves and their state more than all they saw beside.

Any other conversation than about the bull-fight would have been deemed dull, if not impertinent. Grave senators asked each other what sort of bulls they were, others who were the *abanderillados*, or bearers of darts, that, decorated with flags and fillets, and primed at the point with matches of detonating powder, were to be stuck into the infuriated animals. Next the young ladies enquired of their beaux who was to be the picador à cavallo, or man who first received the bull, on his issuing from his dark abode, with a lance or spear couched, with which to turn him away.

“El Nato, flat nose,” said the young gentlemen;* but the most important question of all was whom they were to have as matador or killer of the bull? “*Pedro Padilla*,” they said, and every countenance was lit up with glee.

In poured the multitudes through the several gates of the amphitheatre, and filled it with such rapidity, that in half an hour not a vacant seat was to be found. The most beautiful females were all seated in front of the gentlemen, in what might be called the dress circle; and a rare galaxy of beauty it formed, only we should have liked to see it assembled on some other occasion.

I went on a gala day to one of these bull-fights, when the Viceroy Cizneros and his suite attended. When they entered the band in front of the royal box played the national air of “*España de la Guerra*,” “*Warlike Spain*,” and now in the centre of the circle, stood a company of fine grenadiers,

* He died at last on the horns of the bull; and his horse, mangled to atoms, died by his side. It was considered a glorious treat. At any rate he well deserved his fate, for he was a known ruffian and murderer. He used to boast of having assassinated, among many others, three Englishmen. The most extraordinary part of the matter was, that the importance of the Nato’s calling screened him from the punishment due to his crimes.

who performed many striking and beautiful evolutions before the Viceroy, while the whole audience cheered and applauded them. The soldiers then filed off to their respective stations to protect the company, lest any vicious bull should overleap the wooden parapet erected as a safeguard.

All was now hushed, and breathless expectation held the audience in mute but anxious suspense. At length the bell tinkled, and out from his dark abode rushed a furious animal, that had been teased and goaded to madness in his prison house.

The first person on whom he first set eyes was the *Nato* on horseback, and the bull made a fierce onset upon him. But the dexterous picador turned him off with his spear three or four successive times, till the bull, thus thwarted, ran in among the gaudily attired *abanderillados* on foot. These, waving a little flag to catch his eye and turn him from their persons, covered him with darts which they left sticking and rankling in his sides, flanks, thick and brawny neck, till he became exhausted, and stood looking around him, in bewilderment, for four or five minutes. Then, after making his bow to the audience, the *matador*, or killer, approached to the destined victim, with a long, sharp, and

glittering sword in his right hand, and a little flag in his left. Close he went up to the bull, tempting and provoking him to the onset, till at length the once more infuriated animal ran back about ten yards, and then turning suddenly round, rushed with all his weight, and speed, and madness, his eyes gleaming fire, upon the matador. The bull was received at the sword's point: it ran up to the hilt and reached the heart of the animal, which fell instantly dead at the matador's feet. Carrying his weapon, stained with blood, round the amphitheatre, he was received with shouts and huzzas; garlands were showered upon him by the hands of the fair; and dollars, in some cases ounces of gold, were thrown into the arena from almost every seat in which there were genteel people. In now came an immense gaucho, on a small but compact and spirited horse. The lasso attached to his girth was fastened at the other end to the bull; and the little horse, animated by his master, and straining all his nerves and strength, rode off at a gallop, dragging behind him a huge unwieldy mass, four times at least his own weight. The horse was cheered almost as much as the matador. In this way fourteen bulls were despatched that evening,

two horses killed, and several of the men narrowly escaped. It was called a delightful afternoon's sport; but the most delightful part of the Retiro amusements was the abolition of them, no long time afterwards, by the independent Government. They were characterized, and truly so they deserved to be, as shocking in the eyes of wisdom and philanthropy, as generating at once a love of blood and vicious excitement; as offensive to female delicacy, and injurious to their morals: finally, as incompatible with civilization, and as a legacy of Moorish barbarism. The Bull-ring was pulled down and the materials converted into spacious and commodious barracks for the troops.*

Here we close for the present what we have to say of Buenos Ayres.

Yours, &c.

THE AUTHORS.

* It was the Retiro or Bull-ring which Sir Samuel Auchmuty took with great loss, after a most gallant defence of it by the Buenos Ayreans, on occasion of Whitelock's attack on the city.

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